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ABSTRACT

Grade retention data were collected from the Campbell River, British Columbia schools to determine the prevalence of retention and its effect on school completion. An extensive survey was administered to 52 parents and 204 educators to assess attitudes towards grade retention. Individual interviews were conducted with eight teachers from various grade levels. The results indicated that: (1) of 50 students recommended for retention, 21 were in fact retained, most at the kindergarten and first grade level; (2) retention was a significant predictor of dropping out of high school; (3) retention was most common in the first grade and other primary grades; (4) the ratio of boys versus girls retained was 8 to 5; (5) 48% of boys and 37% of girls who were retained were chronologically younger, having birthdays in October, November, or December; (6) parents felt that the difficult retention and promotion decisions should be made by the teacher, parents, and principal. Parents also suggested, among other comments, that staggered entrance into kindergarten and first grade in September and January might be helpful. Teachers expressed concern about the effects of retention on self-esteem; the school readiness of boys, especially those with late birthdays; and the support of parents in making the retention decision work. (Suggestions for policy and the survey instruments are included.) (Author/GDC)

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GRADE REPETITION STUDY

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GRADE REPETITION STUDY

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AUTHOR(S): Walter Biegler and Craig Gillis

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"GRADE REPETITION STUDY"

SCHOOL DISTRICT #72

CAMPBELL RIVER, B. C.

by

Walter Biegler/Craig Gillis

A study of retention/promotion practices
and an examination of attitudes and opinions
towards retention in School District #72
(Campbell River) with a view to recommending
a retention/promotion policy at the elementary level.

Financial support for this project

was provided through a grant from the

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Financial support for the project was provided through a grant from the EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA.

ABSTRACT

The authors of this study collected grade retention data from Campbell River schools to determine the prevalence of retention in the district and to establish what effect grade repetition has had on school completion. In addition the results of an extensive survey administered to parents and educators in the district were examined to assess attitudes and opinions towards grade retention. To provide an overview of the entire issue, individual interviews were also conducted with teachers at the various grade levels. Parents, too, were invited to share their feelings and suggestions.

Data were analyzed to determine what criteria are used in making the retention decision, if retention applies equally to boys and girls, and if there were any observable trends in promotion and retention over the sample years. The question of whether or not retention has a legitimate function was also addressed. This information resulted in a series of proposals to parents, educators and administrators--those people seen as vital to any promotion/retention decision. The paper concludes with a proposal that a uniform district promotion/retention policy be developed and suggests some items for consideration. The intent of such a policy is to ensure that the final placement results in the most favourable learning situation for each student in question.

A review of current literature is also included in the study.

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INTRODUCTION

As counsellors in two of Campbell River's secondary schools we interact daily with students who are influenced by a wide variety of factors such as home environment, peer groups, and socio-economic conditions. These factors can play a major role in the success or failure a student experiences during his school years. However, it has become increasingly apparent to us both as teachers and as counsellors that one factor appears to link many students who experience the most difficulty at secondary school: grade retention. As defined by Gregg B. Jackson (Jackson, 1975) "grade retention is the practice of requiring a student who has been in a given grade level for a full school year to remain at that level for the subsequent school year" (p.613).

We were particularly interested in examining grade retention at the elementary school level because it seemed to us there was a high correlation between students who experience academic or social problems in grade 8 and those who had been retained at some point during their elementary school years. Our intention then was to investigate this further.

The need for a 'grade retention study' was brought about by three observations:

1. a high percentage of students entering junior secondary school were 'overage' (one or more years older than the majority of students entering grade eight)
2. a high percentage of 'dropouts' among overage students
3. perceived negative social consequences of grade repetition

Of concern to us was the recognition that, as yet, there had been no forum for expression of parent, teacher and administrator attitudes and opinions towards grade retention. Thus we realized the importance of designing a survey and conducting interviews to enable us to determine what educators and parents view as the most important factors related to this issue.

The purpose of our study, then, was to collect and interpret local grade retention data and to determine and assess attitudes and opinions relevant to grade repetition. Our conclusions we hoped would ultimately allow us to formulate recommendations for a district promotional policy at the elementary school level.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Background

School District #72, Campbell River, consists primarily of thirteen elementary schools, two outlying elementary-junior secondary schools, and four junior-senior secondary schools serving a total population of 6,132 students (September 1984).

The need for this study was underscored by three observations. As counsellors we are exposed to a large number of students who are 'at risk' for academic and social reasons. Too often these students ultimately are expelled from school or choose to withdraw. Those students who 'dropout' rarely return to the school system, and if they do, seldom "complete" their formal schooling and achieve graduation. Frequently these are the same students who have repeated grades while in the elementary system.

Secondly, it came to the attention of one specific secondary school that up to 25% of grade eight students over a period of two years were 'overage'. This school had a policy of upgrading overage students, having found in the past that such a practice offered a much needed incentive to these students and often resulted in successful completion of high school. The prospect of attempting this with one quarter of the incoming grade eight population each year was unrealistic and caused administrators and counsellors much concern.

Finally, there was widespread consternation within the district when the principals and staffs were asked to submit to the superintendent a list of elementary students in each grade who had been retained at some point in their schooling and a list of students being considered for retention at the end of the 1984 school year. These lists were then examined by the senior administration of the district. This action raised a number of questions for us: What were the feelings of administrators, teachers, and parents with regard to promotion/retention decisions in the district? On what criteria are promotion/retention decisions based? Does retention have a legitimate function or role in our school system today? What information and insight does research offer? Is there a need for a uniform district promotional policy?

Aims and Objectives

In attempting to answer these and other related questions we formulated the following aims and objectives. Local data were then collected:

1. to determine whether those students initially considered for retention were in fact retained.
2. to determine what percentage of Campbell River students graduate, what percentage of 'graduates' have been retained for at least one year, and what percentage of 'dropouts' have been retained for at least one year.
3. to determine at which grade levels retention is most prevalent and to compare the retention rate of boys with the retention rate of girls.
4. to determine attitudes of administrators, teachers, and parents towards issues related to promotion/retention.

We then drew conclusions from our data. From these conclusions come suggestions that might be considered in the development of a district promotion/retention policy at the elementary school level.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

> "Retention is described as not permitting a student to advance to the next grade level with his classmates. frequent terms for this process are 'grade retention', 'failing', 'flunking', 'keeping back'...."
> (Light, 1977, p. 5)

The initial stages of the project required a systematic review of research literature related to retention and promotion. During the summer and fall of 1984, we searched the following index guides for appropriate journal articles dating back to 1975.

Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)
Research in Education (ERIC)
Canadian Education Index
Directory of Education Studies in Canada
ONTERIS Abstracts
Education Index

After reviewing the literature we classified articles according to four general categories: research favouring promotion; research favouring retention; research examining both 'sides' of the promotion/retention issue; research addressing the retention decision. We summarized the conclusions offered by any articles we considered relevant and focused on the perceived advantages and disadvantages of both promotion and retention.

According to Light (1977) those who oppose retention (favour promotion) typically use the following arguments:

1. If children are not promoted universally, the lower grades would "fill up" with slow learners through retention.
2. Nonpromotion adds greatly to the taxpayers' already heavy burden. Some individuals feel that the cost to the taxpayer of having a child repeat a grade is much greater than .the

gain the child may benefit from it.

3. The best way of classifying children in grade placement is through chronological age. Children tend to achieve better with peers their own age than with younger children or older children.
4. Educational research indicates that children who have "failed" a grade would have learned more if they had been promoted to the next grade level.
5. When a child is "failed," this does not reduce the range of academic achievement in any particular classroom.
6. If the teacher is using a program of individualized instruction, the student's actual achievement should make little or no difference.
7. Classroom homogeneity is not achieved by retention and, in fact, usually creates even greater differences among classmates.

Light also identifies a group of arguments put forth by people who favour retention:

1. The child who is retained will not face the emotional stress of continued embarrassment and is more likely to experience success if he repeats a grade than if he goes on to the next one in his present stage of development.
2. If the child is a slow learner and is placed ahead, he will hold back the rest of the class.
3. Those students who are not able to meet the minimum grade-level requirements should not be placed in the next higher

grade. Placement would, of course, represent an even more difficult academic program than the one that they had just failed. The teacher's instructions and the academic material would be beyond the child's comprehension.

4. Every pupil should be at grade level before being promoted. The child's poor performance in the next higher grade will reflect on the teacher who promoted him.
5. Since a child learns responsibility very early, the fact that he must measure up academically should be clear. Placing a child ahead who has not earned this placement will not prepare him for the competitive, demanding life that will usually come during adulthood.
6. The child who is immature needs the year of physical, social, and intellectual maturation.
7. Promoting children who have failed is unfair to those students who have worked hard for their grade promotion.

The most extensive review of research opposing retention is offered by Gregg B. Jackson (1975). In his methodical study of pre-1973 literature, he argues that "most of the research has been quite inadequate for making valid inferences about the effects of grade retention" (p.614). He claims that neither the few soundly designed studies nor the major portion of the inadequately designed studies prove that "grade retention is more beneficial than grade promotion for students with serious academic or adjustment difficulties" (p. 627). Jackson charges that studies comparing achievement of students before and after retention are biased in favour of retention because they do not control for possible improvement resulting from other influences.

William M. Bocks (1977) argues "the overwhelming majority of the studies reveal that not only is this practice (non-promotion) of no benefit to the child, but often it is harmful" (p.13) Citing studies by several researchers he concludes that retention is not effective as a device to ensure greater mastery of elementary school subject matter; there are many harmful consequences of non-promotion; early elementary teachers need not worry about higher-grade teachers having to deal with a wider range of abilities when every student is promoted; threat of non-promotion is not a motivating force. In summary he concludes that "individualized programs can remove the need for 'a year to grow' and all of the harm that comes from it" (p. 18).

Nat Hentoff (1980) and William Glasser (1969) enter pleas for a reassessment of failure in schools today. Hentoff offers a statistic from New York city where 50 per cent of students entering the ninth grade disappear before graduation. He asks teachers to recognize the evidence that "any child, whatever his background can learn" (p.74). Glasser in examining the impact of failure on a child calls for a change in the philosophy "inherent in so much of our education, that if you fail a child that will cause him to buckle down and work hard; it will make a new man of him" (p.11). He believes "all you learn from failing is how to fail" (p.11). He argues that much time and money are spent identifying those who are succeeding and those who are failing. As an alternative he outlines a seven step program that could help to transform schools which presently have failure.

Abidin, Golladay, and Howerton (1971) cite studies to prove additional years spent in school by retained students do not enable them to catch up or surpass those promoted. Using an experimental group of 85 children who had been retained after first or second grade and 43 children (scoring below the 25th percentile on the Metropolitan Readiness Test) who had never been retained, they collected data when students were in the sixth grade. No differences in the teachers' global ratings of the academic promise of the retained and control groups were noted. Their study also reveals that certain nonacademic variables (i.e. race, socio-economic background, parent support) are related to whether a child will be retained during the first two years of schooling. They submit that the data prove that "retention is largely a noxious educational policy..(and)..that when educators retain a child they frequently doom his educational career" (p.415). The article concludes that "the time has come to either abolish retention or severely restrict its use as an educational practice" (p.416). The authors also suggest that "collecting local data on this issue and helping formulate specific criteria or policy concerning retention would produce greater good both for the child and society than the equivalent time spent in administering some WISCs" (p.416).

C. Thomas Holmes (1983) examined the studies comparing retained students with promoted students in terms of achievement in reading, arithmetic, and language arts. If the actual objective of retention is the improvement of academic achievement in the basic skills, he concludes "the research does not seem to support this practice. It seems that retained pupils fall behind during the year that they are retained and spent the rest of their academic careers in vain attempt to catch up" (p. 4).

In a review of several current studies, M. Scott Norton (1983) argues that retention does not increase learning; does not increase socialization or learning readiness for most; and does not increase homogeneity of groups. He states it tends to promote discipline problems, negatively influences self-concept, and serves as a potential danger for fostering maladjustment. In summary he states, "Non-promotion is not an aid to pupil achievement or to personal development..(and)..non-promotion of pupils as a means of fostering high standards for learning is not supported by research which has extended over a sixty-year period" (p. 286).

The agony of being retained lies in the word "fail" (Mooney, 1970). Teachers should therefore "attempt to generate a tension-free atmosphere in the classroom and .... attempt to purge the concept of failure from the minds, hearts and vocabularies of parents" (p.16). Ponzo (1984) expresses a similar view in stating the meanings we have learned to attribute to failure ("I am a failure." "I am worthless.") are the "fertile breeding grounds to rebellious behaviour or depression, withdrawal, illness and suicide" (p.88). He contends that educators must challenge and change these meanings if the stigma attached to repeating a grade is to become a thing of the past.

A study by Elligett and Tocco (1977) of the promotion/ retention policy developed in Pinellas County Schools in Florida concluded that "retentions have had a positive impact on students' achievement, not only during the year of retention but also during the following year" (p.735). Although two to three times as many retentions resulted from this policy, parental acceptance has been very positive. School officials attributed success to three factors: policy was portrayed as an additional opportunity rather than a penalty; larger numbers of retentions make the retained student feel less "exceptional"; early counselling of parents has mitigated the shock of such a decision.

In Greensville County, Virginia schools rejected age-based (social) promotion in 1973-74 in favour of a "mastery program" due to a feeling that quality education nationwide appeared to be on the decline. Rejecting age-based promotion and requiring that students achieve satisfactory levels of competence before being assigned to a higher grade implies "educators accept the responsibility of seeing that students learn" (Owen & Rannick, 1977, p.531). Rather than repeating a grade with younger children, students were placed in classrooms with similar aged children. This achievement-based promotion program resulted in a lower retention rate, dramatically higher achievement test scores for the County, a more positive student attitude towards testing and higher I.Q. scores which in turn increased student and teacher satisfaction and increased emotional support from the community. Louise Bates Ames (1981) of the Gesell Institute of Human Development in Connecticut, believes that there is no need for children to be emotionally damaged when they are retained. She cites research by psychologist Verne Lewis of Jefferson, Iowa which states 87% of a group of 400 parents of children who had repeated a grade felt the good effects of retention outweighed the bad. 89% claimed there were no regrets about the decision. Ames stresses that "children should start school--and subsequently be promoted--on the basis of their behaviour age rather than on the basis of their age in years or their I.Q." (p.36).

Frances Ilg (1972) discusses how a child's readiness to enter school has traditionally been judged by chronological age rather than "behavioural or maturational readiness". She speaks of "overplacement" or the problem of immaturity blocking a student's ability to cope with emotional and social demands of his grade. Those with fall birthdays are more likely to experience problems. Ilg recommends work be done by school administrators, teachers, and parents to appraise developmentally each child before he enters school. She believes children should start school on the basis of behavioural age rather than chronological age.

Fran Lehr (1982) offers a recent review of the literature. As well as references to the research of Bocks, Reiter, Finlayson, Owen and Ranick, Jackson, Sandoval and Hughes, she cites a study by McAfee who collected data over a two year period from a school district that had implemented a promotion policy. "Analysis of the data revealed that retention appeared to have a beneficial effect in elementary school grades, but had no effect on learning in the junior high school grades. Students in compensatory education groups showed gains as large as or larger than those of the other groups" (p.237).

James R. Johnson (1984) refers to a study by L. Bossing and P. Brien (1980) which acknowledges that most studies show that grade retention does not bring significant gains in achievement, however points out that "results are sometimes more positive when students have been retained because of immaturity" (p.67). The study concludes that there is evidence to contradict the belief that "immature children's self-concepts are harmed by retention" (p.67).

Rose, Medway, Cantrell, Marus (1983) clarify several issues surrounding the retention/promotion controversy. After examining current grade placement policies they conclude "school districts with written policies tended to have flexible standards that take into account individual variation" (p.203). Most policy statements made reference to one or more of four basic factors: students' current achievement level; personal and home factors such as chronological age, social maturity, physical development, and parental attitudes; what is in the 'best interests of the student'; and the number of times a student has been retained.

The article suggests school psychologists can actively assist in grade-placement decisions. At the district level they can help develop promotion policies and generate and evaluate different alternatives to grade retention. At the school level they can play a key role in identifying children likely to profit from different instructional programs, and offer assistance in the development of different programs. They can also offer consultation to parents and teachers as to the most appropriate use of such programs.

Much is being accomplished in schools to provide students with many more opportunities to realize potential skills and overcome weaknesses. There is, however, a recognition that under certain circumstances, a child might benefit from repeating a grade. Lindvig (1983) contends that there is a need to look at the individual child and assess the factors that are likely to contribute to a successful retention. Whether the lack of achievement results from a late birthdate, unstable home environment, emotional as well as developmental immaturity, physiological factors or specific learning disabilities, "an attempt should be made to view the whole child, to trace his or her history in school, and to exhaust alternatives. All in all, there should be an attempt to identify the nature of the problem and to see how retention will benefit the child as a whole. The age, maturity and social adjustment of the child should be given serious consideration." (Lindvig, 1983, p. 288).

Brown (1981) suggests a team approach to evaluating retention. This team consisting of the child's teachers and other specialists (nurse, psychologist, reading specialist, counsellor) would discuss various aspects of the child's problem. Parents would be informed honestly and specifically. A written log would be kept documenting the child's progess in order to allow for a later review to occur before making a retention or promotion decision.

Once a decision on retention is reached, there are several things that will likely influence the child's acceptance of this.

The parents' attitude toward the retention has a lot to do with the child's response to repeating a grade. If the parents are positive toward it, the child is likely to be more receptive (Ames, 1981). Thus it is important that the parents and the child understand the reasons for the retention and the long term benefits to be gained (Lindvig, 1983).

Light (1977) developed a scale designed to identify candidates for retention. Light's Retention Scale consists of nineteen categories specifically designed as a tool for objective assessment of whether or not a child should be retained. (See Appendix I) Light suggests that the scale, devised from retention research, be used to complement the professional judgment of the educator. It is "designed specifically for the school professional to use as a counselling tool during a parent conference or as a means of determining what educational and psychological research would tell us about a specific retention candidate" (p. 5).

METHODOLOGY

To meet the objectives of our project it was essential to collect data from a number of sources. We were fortunate to have easy access to school records and to have the support of parents and educators in School District #72. Although the time-lines for the different sections of our project often overlapped, the project was developed in stages that clearly attempted to meet our four basic objectives. What is presented here is a discussion of the process used to satisfy each of the objectives.

Our project first began to take shape when we became aware of a body of data collected by the Supervisor of Elementary Instruction of School District #72. The senior administration felt there was a need to examine the entire promotion/retention philosophy at the elementary level in the hope of developing a more consistent approach. A letter directed to all principals of the local elementary and elementary-junior secondary schools requested the identification of all students being considered for retention in June, 1984. Once these lists were compiled, meetings were scheduled near the end of May, 1984 involving the Superintendent, Supervisor of Elementary Instruction, Supervisor of Special Services, and Principal of each school. These meetings had a twofold purpose: to emphasize the principal's final responsibility in promotion/retention decisions and to reduce the number of retentions. The Superintendent cited research that indicated retention was an ineffective means of furthering student achievement but was prepared to consider each case on its own merits. At the conclusion of these meetings a recommendation was made for the placement of each student in September of 1984. The principal, however, was left with the final decision.

In the summer of 1984 we acquired copies of the student lists. Our purpose in working with this data was to determine how many students had initially been considered for retention and then to determine how many students were promoted and how many were retained. This we were able to do by contacting the principals of each school in February 1985 for information about the status of each student who had been discussed at the original meetings. The results of our findings are reflected in Tables 1-3 on page 27.

We had also hoped to be able to compare the success of each student six months after the decision had been made. Our initial plan was to examine standardized tests and report card achievement. However, due to the wide range of variables affecting each student and the fact that one standardized test is not universally administered to every student throughout the district, we realized that the validity of any achievement comparison might be in question. What we did do is interview each principal about the perceived academic and social success of the student as of February. Principals were very willing to share their observations or the observations of teachers presently working with the students. These findings are discussed in the general conclusions of this paper.

In achieving our second objective, we sought answers to three questions: What percentage of Campbell River students graduate? What percentage of 'graduates' have been retained for at least one year? What percentage of 'dropouts' have been retained for at least one year? The purpose of this study was to determine if there was any correlation between grade retention and completion of secondary school and to identify any trends evident in the years studied.

This portion of the project necessitated an examination of the Permanent Record Cards in the four Campbell River secondary schools: Carihi (Campbell River High School), Southgate, Robron, and Phoenix. Accordingly we gained permission from the Superintendent and the principals of the respective schools.

Immediately we faced an obstacle. In our original project proposal we had chosen to study the records of those students with birthdates of 1957, 1961, and 1965. However, in August 1976, Campbell River Junior Secondary was destroyed in a fire, and with it, all existing student records. Consequently, the students in grades 8, 9, and 10 of that year (who would eventually attend Carihi) have no 'pre-1976' records. We therefore had to change our 'dates'. We selected three new years to offer a wider time span in hopes that we might also be able to observe any educational trends. The new birthdates chosen were 1953, 1959, and 1965.

Our primary source was Carihi because pre-1978 it was the only Campbell River school which graduated students. Thus most students with a 1953 or 1959 birthdate graduated from Carihi. As of 1978 Southgate Secondary began graduating students. Thus students with a 1965 birthdate had graduated from Carihi or Southgate.

To collect data on the non-graduates or 'dropouts', records at all four schools had to be searched. Since the Permanent Record Card remains in the last school a student attends, most non-graduates' records were found at Carihi and Southgate. A few records were found at Robron and Phoenix.

Many hours were spent searching through Permanent Record Cards with 1953, 1959, and 1965 birthdates. Separate statistics were kept for students of each year. Of chief concern to us were the following data: birthdate, sex, graduate/non-graduate status, elementary school entry date, last year of school, last grade completed, grade(s) repeated. (See Appendix A) Once this information was collected it was organized according to graduates and non-graduates of each year. Statistics were kept separately for males and females. Any repeated grades were recorded. The results of our research are found in Tables 4-7 on pages 30-32. Our discussion of the results makes note of the differences in retentions in each year. Also of note is the distinction between the percentage of male and female graduates. This is in part related to our third objective, however, discussion of the differences was seen to be most applicable to the final conclusions of our paper.

At this point it is important to note that incomplete records complicated our task. In some cases gaps existed in school records for certain students. Since the Permanent Record

Card never leaves the B.C. public school system there were times when a student's records remained in the school even though he/she had transferred to a private or out of province school OR had transferred from a private school or out of province school into our system. Thus for some students who were 'off schedule' when they graduated or left school it was difficult to ascertain in which year(s) they were retained. In the case of students who appeared to have experienced success in school before records ended, we made the assumption that they had transferred to a private or out of province school (although no record existed). To our advantage was the fact that we knew, or knew of, many of the students with whom we were dealing. Consequently there were times when we could recall such a transfer despite the fact that there was no written record of it. It would have been helpful to us had there been greater consistency from school to school, district to district and province to province when dealing with records as significant as the Permanent Record Card!

The third objective of our project was to determine at what grade level retention is most prevalent and to compare the retention rate of boys with that of girls. Our approach to the first part of this objective was again aided by information collected through the Superintendent's office. In early June, 1984 the Supervisor of Instruction sent a form to each elementary teacher in the district requesting a "list of all students who are presently at the designated grade level and whose birthdates do not fall within those stated." (January 1 to December 31 of expected entry year.) Name, birthdate, delayed entry (where applicable) and repeated grade(s) were all requested. Because those students in grade 7 (birthdate 1971) are in the last year of elementary school, and could possibly have repeated any one of the years from K-7, we chose this group for our study. Thus in order to meet the needs of our objective we decided to examine "grade levels at which grade 7 students had been retained."

A second body of information was also collected when examining the Permanent Record Cards. Again using students with birthdates of 1953, 1959, and 1965 we recorded the grades at which students had been retained.

Ultimately we developed Table 8 on page 34 which portrays the total number of students from each birthdate year of 1953, 1959, 1965, and 1971 and the total retentions for each level of elementary school from Kindergarten to grade 7.

The second part of objective three was to compare the retention rate of boys with that of girls. In devising tables similar to the one used for total retentions we were able to make a distinction between retention rates of boys and girls. (See Tables 9 & 10, page 36.) We noted significant differences. These differences were even more dramatic when grade 7 students with 'late fall' birthdates (October, November & December) were considered. (See Table 11, page 38.) The broader significance of these findings is discussed in the final conclusions of our paper.

The principal thrust of our study is identified in our fourth objective: to determine attitudes of administrators, teachers, and parents in School District #72 towards retention/

promotion practices. In order to achieve this objective it was necessary to construct a survey that we felt could act as a forum for attitudes and opinions of educators and parents.

Although our research was ongoing, the initial search of educational journal articles was conducted in the summer of 1984 while we were in attendance at the University of Victoria. An item pool was constructed based upon our research and discussion with other educators. We designed a 27 item survey which employed a five point Likert-type scale ranging from YES (strongly agree) to NO (strongly disagree). This first survey was then submitted to our 'measurement and evaluation' professor, discussed, and eventually revised in an attempt to clarify and balance survey items.

The revised draft of the survey was then administered to a group of 22 graduate students in our program. Accompanying the survey was a group of open ended questions which prompted feedback about the content and format of the survey. Comments were considered, items were re-examined, and a third draft was developed. This draft was limited to 20 items using the five point Likert-type scale, a 7 item section asking respondents to indicate the degree of involvement of a number of people related to a promotion/retention decision, and a final item asking who should have the final say in a promotion/retention decision. This draft was then submitted to David Bateson of ERIBC. He offered written feedback and additional suggestions when he was in Campbell River. The final draft of the survey was then developed. (See Appendix D)

We attended the monthly Principals/Vice-principals' meeting to present a brief explaining the purpose of our project and to request permission to administer the survey to every school in School District #72. Once permission was granted the survey was typeset and 150 copies were printed by the local Resource Centre.

After dividing the schools between us, we each made contact with our list of schools to arrange a time during December and January for administration of the survey. Most surveys were distributed at staff meetings. The purposes of the survey and project were explained, questions were answered, and surveys were left to be completed. Participants completed the 28 question survey on a computer card and some also completed a survey feedback sheet which allowed for a more open response to issues related to promotion and retention. In addition, interested respondents were given the opportunity to share their feelings/ concerns about retention with us in private interview sessions.

The senior administrators of the district were also given the survey to complete.

Parents were contacted through the two schools in which we work: Southgate and Phoenix. Several steps were taken to contact parents. Initially the survey was explained in a newsletter and volunteers were encouraged to participate at a Parents' Night. A letter was written to explain the survey purpose and to offer instructions for completion of the survey. (See Appendix F) Secondly, a random sample of parents was selected and surveys were sent home with students.

Once collected, data were examined according to two major categories: parents and educators. The total survey for the educators was then reclassified according to area of interest and years of experience. Thus responses of administrators, primary teachers, intermediate teachers, and secondary teachers were examined separately. Following this, primary, intermediate, and secondary teacher responses were classified according to three experience groups: 2-5 years, 6-15 years, 15+ years. Discussion of the comparisons followed.

Of the thirty-one educators who expressed a willingness to be interviewed, eight were selected. Taped interviews ranging from a half hour to two hours were conducted following a general set of questions we had developed. (See Appendix H) A summary of each interview was written. Similarities and differences between responses to the questions were then noted and a series conclusions were drawn.

Once the objectives of our project were met we examined our research with a view to developing conclusions for our project as a whole. From these conclusions we were able to offer suggestions for the development of a district promotion/ retention policy at the elementary school level.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Objective #1: TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT STUDENTS PROPOSED FOR RETENTION WERE RETAINED.

As previously mentioned, each elementary school in the district had been requested to submit to the superintendent a list of students who were being considered for retention at the end of June, 1984. Subsequently, the principals of these school met individually with the superintendent, the supervisor of elementary instruction and the supervisor of special services to determine if retention was the best course of action or if some other alternative existed. The district administrators made recommendations to the principal about placement for each student but the final decision was left up to the principal. We were interested in knowing what that final decision was and how the students involved were faring this year.

It turned out that 53 students had been proposed for retention. Of these, three had moved out of district and therefore information was not available about their eventual placement or about their progress this year. For the remaining 50, however, we contacted each elementary school to determine at which grade level these students had been placed and and if the placement was deemed to be successful. (Of interest to us, too, was the fact that the number of boys proposed for retention outnumbered girls by a 33-17 margin.)

We discovered that of the 50 potential retainees, only 21 had in fact been retained. (See Table 1, p. 27). Only two of these took place at a level higher than grade two and each of these was a "special" case. One was a boy in grade six whose parents insisted the child repeat despite the recommendations of the supervisor of special services, the district psychologist and principal. That student has experienced considerable academic and social difficulties this year. The other "retention" was also a grade six boy who had not really attended at all during the year and who had not shown up for school this year either.

With the exception of one girl who was retained in grade two, all other retentions (18 out of 21) took place at the kindergarten (10) and grade one (8) levels. Thirteen of these were boys (8 in kindergarten, 5 in grade one) while only 5 were girls (2 in kindergarten, 3 in grade one). (Tables 2 & 3, p. 27)

These statistics are in keeping with the views expressed by educators and parents on our survey, that retention was most beneficial at the primary level. A similar view was also expressed by educators in the interviews.

When questioned about the students considered for retention who were retained, principals and teachers often cited "immaturity", "identification with a younger peer group", "short attention span" and "insecurity" as the major reasons for the decision to have students repeat kindergarten or grade one.

The question of why so many more boys than girls are retained is one we explored further in our interviews with teachers.

In the initial project proposal, we had intended to conduct a follow-up assessment of the academic and social progress of the students who had been retained and those who had been promoted.

TABLE 1

STUDENTS CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION VS. THOSE ACTUALLY RETAINED, June, 1984

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Considered for retention	14	15	3	1	3	1	6	7	50
Actually retained	10	8	1	0	0	0	2	0	21

TABLE 2

BOYS CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION VS. THOSE ACTUALLY RETAINED, June, 1984

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Considered for retention	9	11	2	1	2	0	4	4	33
Actually retained	8	5	0	0	0	0	2	0	15

TABLE 3

GIRLS CONSIDERED FOR RETENTION VS. THOSE ACTUALLY RETAINED, June, 1984

	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total
Considered for retention	5	4	1	0	1	1	2	3	17
Actually retained	2	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	6

As mentioned earlier, this was not feasible because there is no uniform standardized testing program at the primary level. As achievement at this level is expressed through anecdotal reports, we felt we could gain as much insight into the success or failure of the retention/promotion decision by speaking to the principals and/or teachers working with these students. From these discussions we were able to conclude that most decisions had led to success or had certainly been judged not harmful. For retained students in kindergarten and grade one, the feeling was that most had "settled in", "blossomed" and "become more confident". They were, in general, "coming along nicely" and "were going to make it". The only problem cases were the older students who had been promoted and the one student who had been retained at parental insistence despite recommendations to the contrary. Yet for those students who had been promoted it was felt their chances of finding success would likely have been no better had they been retained. As authors of this project, we recognize that the ultimate success or failure of all these decisions may not be apparent for years to come.

Objective #2: TO DETERMINE WHAT PERCENTAGE OF CAMPBELL RIVER STUDENTS GRADUATE, WHAT PERCENTAGE OF 'GRADUATES' HAVE BEEN RETAINED FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR, AND WHAT PERCENTAGE OF 'DROPOUTS' HAD BEEN RETAINED FOR AT LEAST ONE YEAR.

To determine what effect grade retention had on school completion, we examined the Permanent Record (PR) cards of students born in 1953 (class of '71), 1959 (class of '77) and 1965 (class of '83). We noted which of these students had completed Grade 12 and if any of those students had ever been retained during their schooling. For any student who did not graduate, we recorded the last grade completed as well as the grade or grades where he/she was retained (if any).

It was readily apparent from the data (see Table 4) that the percentage of students graduating from school has been steadily increasing. In 1971, only 46.9% of the students born in 1953 and attending school in Campbell River graduated. This increased to 57.3% in 1977 (students born in 1959) and to 68.2% in 1983 (students born in 1965).

To some extent, this increase is due to successful efforts to provide programs to fit the needs of the individual. However, it also seems likely that a major incentive for continuing in school has been the decrease in the number of desireable employment opportunities for those with little education. Certainly, when Elk Falls Mill, a major employer in Campbell River, made high school graduation a condition of employment in 1974, many more students were motivated to complete Grade 12! A decrease in the number of jobs available in logging and fishing over recent years has also had an effect. In today's labour market, for

TABLE 4

PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES & NON-GRADUATES

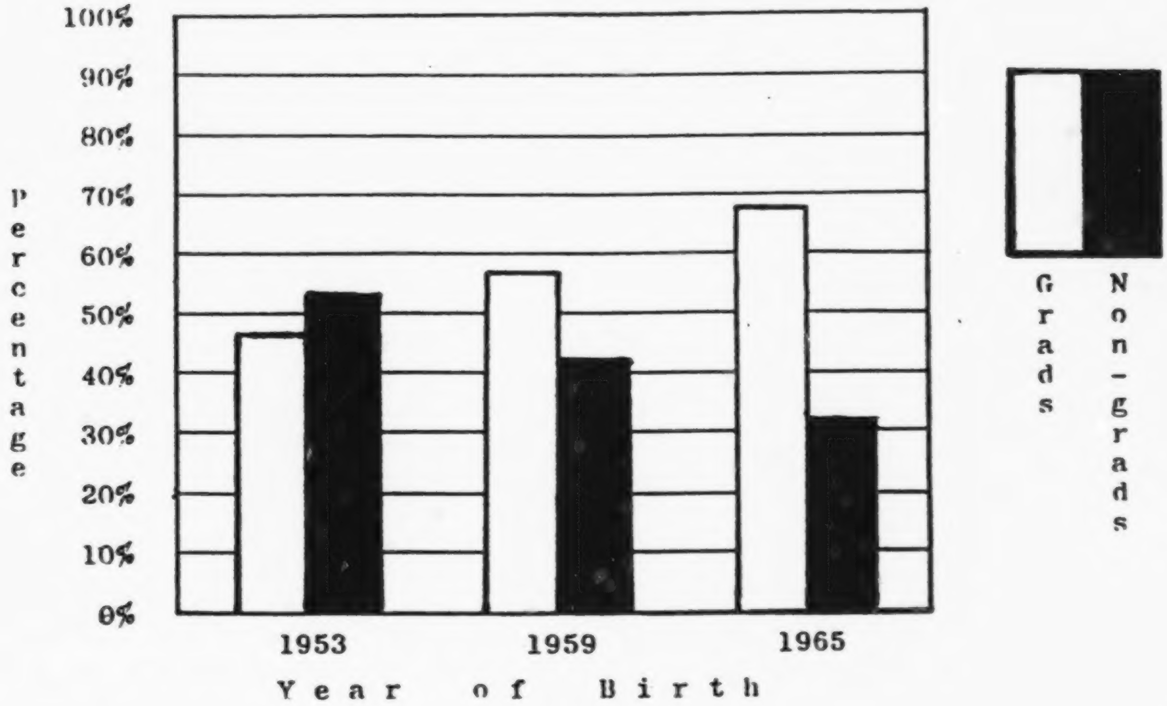

TABLE 5

PERCENTAGE OF GRADUATES & NON-GRADUATES BY GENDER

Birthdate		Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
1 9 5 3	Graduates	62	42%	72	53%	134	47%
	Non-graduates	87	58%	65	47%	152	53%
	Total	149		137		286	
1 9 5 9	Graduates	92	46%	114	69%	236	57%
	Non-graduates	110	54%	66	31%	176	43%
	Total	202		210		412	
1 9 6 5	Graduates	133	63%	153	74%	288	68%
	Non-graduates	78	37%	56	26%	134	32%
	Total	211		211		422	

youth who must eventually earn a living, there is little alternative but to get a high school diploma.

Although we had intended to focus only upon the percentage of graduates versus non-graduates, the startling difference between the percentage of males who graduated compared to females who graduated (see Table 5) warranted comment. In the years studied the percentage of female graduates is always greater than the percentage of male graduates ranging from a difference of 11% for 1953 and 1965 birthdates to a high of 23% for 1959 birthdates. In addition we noted that in every one of our sample years the percentage of female graduates exceeds the percentage of female non-graduates, from a low of 53% in 1953 (class of '71) to a high of 74% in 1965 (class of '83). However, it it not until 1965 (class of '83) that the percentage of male graduates outnumbers the percentage of male non-graduates.

In comparing the percentage of graduates who had been retained with non-graduates who had been retained, it also became apparent to us that grade repetition appears to have a pronounced effect on school completion. (See Tables 6 & 7) Whereas over the three years examined in this study only 11.7% of the students who graduated had ever repeated a grade, this figure jumps to 49.1% for non-graduates. For boys, this ratio holds true, with 15.7% of the graduates having repeated a grade as compared to 64% of the non-graduates. For girls, this disparity is greater, with only 8.9% of female graduates having ever repeated a grade as compared to 47.0% of the non-graduates. It would seem that grade retention is a significant predictor of later school dropout.

TABLE 6

GRADUATES WHO REPEATED GRADES

Birthdate	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1953	15	24.2%	12	16.7%	27	20.1%
1959	11	12.0%	12	8.3%	23	9.7%
1965	18	13.5%	9	5.8%	27	9.4%
Total	44	15.3%	33	8.9%	77	11.7%

TABLE 7

NON-GRADUATES WHO REPEATED GRADES

Birthdate	Male		Female		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1953	50	57.5%	33	50.8%	83	53.9%
1959	44	40.0%	29	43.9%	73	41.5%
1965	45	57.7%	26	46.4%	71	53.0%
Total	139	50.5%	88	47.0%	227	49.1%

Objective #3: TO DETERMINE AT WHICH GRADE LEVELS RETENTION IS MOST PREVALENT AND TO COMPARE THE RETENTION RATE OF BOYS WITH THE RETENTION RATE OF GIRLS.

To achieve this objective, we examined the Permanent Record cards of Grade 7 students born in 1953 (graduates of 1971), 1959 (graduates of 1977), 1965 (graduates of 1983) and 1971 (future graduates of 1989). The data were compiled in Table 8.

From this data, it is apparent that for the four years we examined, Grade 1 was the year when most retentions took place. A secondary 'peak' was noted in Grade 3 except in the earliest year studied where the second highest number of retentions was in Grade 4. In the most recent year studied (1971 birthdates), the retentions in kindergarten slightly exceeded the retentions at the Grade 3 level. The table also shows that retentions in the intermediate grades decreased dramatically in comparison to primary years. Interestingly, no retentions occurred at the Grade 7 level last year. This seems to indicate that the sometimes-heard comment that "if retention is to take place, it should take place at the primary level" is borne out in practice.

The percentage of retentions per grade was significantly higher across the board for the 1953 group than for subsequent years. This can be explained by the fact that before the '60's and '70's, students who did not achieve academically as well as their classmates were "failed". Being retained more than once in elementary school was also not uncommon. (We came across some cases in which students had actually spent three years in the same grade!)

In today's programs (and certainly borne out by the 1959,

TABLE 8

GRADE LEVELS AT WHICH GRADE 7 STUDENTS HAD BEEN RETAINED

NUMBER OF RETENTIONS/GRADE LEVEL

Birth-date	No. of Students	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total Retained
1953	286	1	23	13	15	21	13	5	5	96
1959	412	0	18	6	13	5	9	3	2	56
1965	422	0	19	10	12	10	4	6	10	71
1971	497	12	36	8	11	4	2	1	0	74

PERCENTAGE OF RETENTIONS/GRADE LEVEL

Birth-date	No. of Students	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Percent Retained
1953	286	0.3	8.0	4.5	5.2	7.3	4.5	1.7	1.7	33.6%
1959	412	0.0	4.4	1.5	3.2	1.2	2.2	0.7	0.5	13.6%
1965	422	0.0	4.5	2.4	2.8	2.4	0.9	1.4	2.4	16.8%
1971	497	2.4	7.2	1.6	2.2	0.8	0.4	0.2	0.0	14.9%

1965 and 1971 groups), retention is usually restricted to one grade throughout the child's school career and usually occurs at the primary level. Certainly, too, the whole idea of 'social promotion'--promoting a child with others his age even if he has not attained the expected level of achievement--has prompted a decline in the high retention rates of the earliest year of this study.

Another factor is that in 1969, Special Services became a recognized function and learning assistance became prevalent in most the schools. As a result, education appropriate to the needs of certain students who in the past did not have suitable curricula was provided, thereby again reducing the number of retentions.

We also analyzed the data (see Tables 9 & 10) to determine if boys and girls were equally likely to be retained. It turned out that overall, boys retained outnumbered girls retained by a ratio of 8:5. In fact, for the four years studied, in only five of thirty-two instances did the percentage of girls retained exceed the percentage of boys retained (1953: Grade 1 & 5; 1959: Grade 1 & 2; 1965: Grade 4). When one considers that immaturity and/or immature behaviour is most commonly cited as figuring in a retention decision, it is hardly surprising that boys are retained much more than girls.

We examined the data from one other aspect. Since maturity (or lack of it) figures so prominently in retention decisions, we also were curious to see if students with a 'late fall' birthdate (born in October, November or December) were retained more

TABLE 9

GRADE LEVELS AT WHICH GRADE 7 BOYS HAD BEEN RETAINED

Birth-date	No. of Boys	NUMBER RETAINED/GRADE LEVEL								Total Retained
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1953	149	1	11	9	9	14	9	3	3	59
1959	202	0	8	2	10	3	7	1	1	32
1965	211	0	13	7	7	2	3	5	10	47
1971	245	11	25	4	8	2	1	1	0	52

Birth-date	No. of Boys	PERCENTAGE RETAINED/GRADE LEVEL								Percent Retained
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1953	149	0.7	7.4	6.0	6.0	9.4	6.0	2.0	2.0	39.6%
1959	202	0.0	4.0	1.0	5.0	1.5	3.5	0.5	0.5	15.8%
1965	211	0.0	6.2	3.3	3.3	0.9	1.4	2.4	4.7	22.3%
1971	245	4.5	10.2	1.6	3.3	0.8	0.4	0.4	0.0	21.2%

TABLE 10

GRADE LEVELS AT WHICH GRADE 7 GIRLS HAD BEEN RETAINED

Birth-date	No. of Girls	NUMBER RETAINED/GRADE LEVEL								Total Retained
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1953	137	0	12	4	6	7	4	2	2	37
1959	210	0	10	4	3	2	2	2	1	24
1965	211	0	6	3	5	8	1	1	0	24
1971	252	1	11	4	3	2	1	0	0	22

Birth-date	No. of Girls	PERCENTAGE RETAINED/GRADE LEVEL								Percent Retained
		K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1953	137	0.0	8.8	2.9	4.4	5.1	2.9	1.5	1.5	25.5%
1959	210	0.0	4.8	1.9	1.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.5	12.4%
1965	211	0.0	2.8	1.4	2.4	3.8	0.5	0.5	0.0	11.4%
1971	252	0.4	4.3	1.6	1.2	0.8	0.4	0.0	0.0	8.7%

frequently than their 'older' classmates (see Table 11). It seemed significant to us that of all students who had been retained, 44% had 'late fall' birthdates. Of boys retained, 48% had 'late fall' birth-dates, while for girls, the figure was 37%. It would appear from this that children who enter school before they are ready can be at a serious disadvantage and stand a good chance of being retained.

TABLE 11

GRADE 7 STUDENTS WITH FALL BIRTHDATES WHO HAD BEEN RETAINED AS A PERCENTAGE OF ALL GRADE 7 RETAINEES.

Year of Birth	Total Number of Retentions	Male		Female		Total	
		#	%	#	%	#	%
1953	96	24	41%	11	31%	35	37%
1959	56	15	47%	12	46%	27	48%
1965	71	29	62%	11	46%	40	56%
1971	74	23	44%	6	27%	29	39%
	297	91	48%	40	37%	131	44%

*Fall Birthdate = Oct/Nov/Dec

Objective #4: TO DETERMINE ATTITUDES OF ADMINISTRATORS, TEACHERS AND PARENTS TOWARDS ISSUES RELATED TO PROMOTION/RETENTION.

A survey of twenty-eight attitudinal items based on previous research findings was developed. (See Appendix D) The purpose of the survey was to determine current attitudes and assess awareness of parents and educators towards retention/promotion issues.

Surveys were sent to 100 parents in School District #72. Of these 52 (52%) were returned. Surveys were given to 296 educators. Of these 204 (69%) were returned. The group of educators was categorized as follows: 25 administrators; 63 secondary teachers; 70 intermediate teachers; 65 primary teachers. (Some elementary teachers whose interest was at both the primary and intermediate levels responded using both descriptors; hence, responses were counted in both groups.) Years of experience were also taken into account in the analysis of the data.

Items 1 through 20 were responded to using a five-point Likert-type scale (ranging from strong YES to strong NO). Items 21 through 27 were responded to using a three-point scale to reflect the degree of involvement of each person/group in a retention decision. Item 28 used a seven-point scale to indicate who should have the FINAL SAY in retention/promotion decisions.

In assessing the responses to the survey, we considered each item separately. We attempted to identify similarities and/or noticeable discrepancies in the responses of educators and parents; and of administrators, secondary teachers, intermediate teachers, and primary teachers.

Item 1: Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.

Parents were quite divided on this item. 48% agreed in comparison to the 72% agreement of the educators. In the minds of primary and intermediate teachers physical maturity was significant (79%;76%), whereas administrators indicated it was important but of less concern (56%). Only 9% of all educators were undecided, indicating there are definite opinions on this issue.

Item 2: Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.

Parents were most frequently in agreement at 81%. Educators in total were 69% in agreement while intermediate teachers placed highest value on standardized tests at 74%. It appears that teachers, although recognizing the value of standardized tests in retention decisions, do not consider them as helpful as parents think they might be.

Item 3: Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.

Again agreement was very high. Parents and educators responded similarly (76%;77%) yet it was the primary and intermediate teachers who indicated strongest general agreement (82%;86%). We saw it as significant that those teachers who work with elementary school students were so strongly in agreement on this item.

Item 4: If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).

Parents and educators rated this as important (77%;72%) yet what is most notable is that this question raised the highest STRONGLY AGREE response of any survey item from the educators (45%) and was one of the highest STRONGLY AGREE items for parents (37%). Among educators, 49% of secondary teachers were in agreement in contrast to 87% primary and 81% intermediate. For educators the 7% undecided response was the lowest on the survey.

Item 5: Promotion in the elementary school should be by level rather than by individual subject.

Most groups were in clear agreement as indicated by a 71% agreement response from parents and 75% from educators. The highest agreement was found amongst primary teachers. This can be interpreted as general support for the present grade by grade promotion system at the elementary level.

Item 6: If most students pass then academic standards are "too slack".

Of all items, this received the largest general disagreement (90%) from educators. Of these 49% indicated STRONGLY DISAGREE. Only 3% of all educators agreed. Administrators disagreed in 96% of all cases; no administrators indicated agreement. 71% of the parents disagreed; only 16% agreed.

Item 7: School District 72 should have a uniform retention/ promotion policy.

For this item there was no clear distinction to be made between the responses of educators and parents. 73% of educators and parents expressed support for a district promotion/retention policy, whereas 16% of educators and parents disagreed. This response would indicate that should a district promotion/retention policy be considered it would be favourably received by a significant majority of parents and teachers alike.

Item 8: Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.

A signficant number of responses from educators and parents were undecided (23%). Obviously this item is an area of uncertainty for many. Agreement was indicated by 52% of parents and 57% of educators. This seems to confirm that parents and teachers have a serious concern that self-concept may suffer as a result of retention.

Item 9: Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.

Parents registered 85% disagreement. It is important to note that almost half (48%) of all parents chose STRONGY DISAGREE, their greatest such response on the survey. 69% of all educators disagreed. The highest disagree responses came from secondary teachers (84%) whose response to this item was the clearest expression of disagreement for any survey item. In contrast 44% of the administrators disagreed and 44% agreed.

Item 10: Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.

There was a strong feeling that there is no reason to discourage retention at Kindergarten and Grade one. 74% of parents and 81% of educators disagreed. This is borne out by survey item #4 in which parents and educators expressed agreement that retention is most beneficial at the primary level. Disagree responses ranged from a high of 90% from primary teachers to a low of 67% from administrators.

Item 11: In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.

Among parents 63% disagreed, 15% were undecided, and 21% agreed. Among educators 47% disagreed, 24% were undecided, and 29% agreed. Clearly adminstrators differed in that only 32% disagreed whereas 64% agreed. Only 4% of administrators were undecided. Of note is the 31% undecided response from the primary teachers and the 27% undecided response from the intermediate teachers.

Item 12: At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.

A significant number of responses were undecided for this item. 12% of parents agreed, 57% disagreed, and 31% were undecided. This item offered little discrimination among educators as 37% agreed, 30% disagreed, and 34% were undecided. However administrators responded much differently. 64% agreed, 24% disagreed and only 12% were undecided. Item #19 reveals that most administrators are familiar with the literature whereas most parents and many educators are not. This raises the question of whether familiarity (or lack of it!) with the research has a direct bearing on the wide range of responses from the distinct groups.

Item 13: Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.

Of parents 27% agreed, 56% disagreed and 17% were undecided. Educators, however, again seemed quite divided. 39% agreed, 36% disagreed, and 25% were undecided. Of this group the administrators again were clearly apart from other educators. 68% agreed, 24% disagreed, and only 8% were undecided. Again familiarity with the research would have a bearing on the responses to this item.

Item 14: Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.

There was clear agreement on this item. Parents responded at 81% agreement and educators at 74%. Of the educators secondary teachers expressed strongest support (85%) and administrators lowest (64%).

Item 15: Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.

According to the literature some educators believe that retention serves to reduce the range within a class. Thus this item was of particular interest to us. Parents and educators responded similarly. 23% of parents agreed while 61% disagreed and 22% of educators agreed while 62% disagreed. The only other result of note was at the secondary level where teachers appeared quite split. 40% agreed while 30% disagreed.

Item 16: Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.

Again literature cited this as a reason often expressed to support retention. Parents were quite split as reflected by 39% agreement, 33% disagreement and 27% undecided. Educators registered 25% agreement, 48% disagreement and 27% undecided. However, between groups of educators there were some clear differences ranging from 64% disagreement for primary teachers to 32% disagreement for secondary teachers. Secondary teachers were the only group with a higher agree (35%) than disagree response. Perhaps this reflects a difference in the age group of students with whom secondary teachers work.

Item 17: Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.

There was strong agreement throughout. This appeared to surface as the single most important reason to retain students. Parents (77%) and educators (76%) agreed on this item. Agreement ranged from 66% for intermediate teachers to 82% for administrators. The item response strongly paralleled the response to item #3 which also drew strong agreement from both parents and educators.

Item 18: Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.

This item clearly discriminated between parents and educators. Parent responses were 66% agree and 27% disagree. Educators chose agree 33% of the time and disagree 51% of the time. It appeared that for educators mastery was not necessarily a condition for retention. Administrators clearly disagreed with the item at 76% and only 8% agreement.

> Item 19: Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.

Of all items this clearly drew the largest undecided response. 56% of parents and 46% of educators were undecided. 18% of parents selected disagree responses whereas 49% of educators chose disagree. Of all administrators responding 0% agreed, only 8% were undecided and an overwhelming 92% selected disagree. The large undecided response from parents and educators may be due to lack of familiarity with current research.

> Item 20: Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.

This item offered the clearest discrimination between parent and educator responses. 92% of all parents agreed, 6% disagreed, and 2% were undecided. This was the highest agreement of any item for parents and the lowest undecided response. On the other hand educators registered 50% agreement and 42% disagreement. Administrators offered the sharpest contrast to parents with 37% agreement and 59% disagreement.

Following our examination of items 1 to 20 for each group in our survey we then took a closer look at items 15 to 20 according to years of experience. These items were considered worthy of closer attention because they are often cited as reasons for retention of students. Our survey had designated four experience groups: 0-1 year, 2-5 years, 6-15 years, 15 or more (15+) years. However, as there have been so few new teachers in our district due to restraint we received negligible responses in the first category, and thus concentrated our analysis on the last three.

Item 15 reflected a range according to years of experience particularly at the secondary level. 40% of secondary teachers with 2-5 years experience agreed grade repetition reduces the range of abilities in class, whereas only 20% with 15+ years felt so. There was little range in the primary and intermediate levels.

Item 16 showed little range at the secondary level but interestingly at the primary and intermediate levels the strongest agreement was indicated by the teachers with 6-15 years experience. 19% of the primary and 32% of the intermediate teachers felt grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.

Item 17, that grade repetition helps students have more time to mature, reflected clear agreement at each level of experience. The largest range was secondary at 12%

Item 18 reflected noticeable differences at the primary level. When asked if students should be promoted only after mastery of essential language arts and mathematics skills, 60% of primary teachers with 2-5 years of experience agreed, 29% of teachers with 6-15 years experience agreed, and 18% of teachers with 15+ years agreed. It is a range of 42% The range was much lower at secondary and intermediate levels. Only 14% of intermediate teachers with 2-5 years of experience agreed which was in stark contrast to the 60% primary and 67% secondary teachers who also agreed. However, when considering those teachers with 15+ years of experience, 18% at primary agreed, 26% at intermediate agreed, and 60% at secondary level agreed.

Item 20 reflected the greatest range. At the primary level 100% of teachers with 2-5 years experience agreed promotion indicates a student has mastered a stage of learning. 52% of those in the 6-15 year range agreed, and 50% of those with 15+ years agreed. Highest agreement at the intermediate level again came from the 2-5 year group at 71% yet lowest was the 6-15 group with 36% agreement. At the secondary level 87% in the 2-5 year range agreed, 41% in the 6-15 year range agreed, and 50% with 15+ years agreed.

In the decision to promote or retain a child, items 21-27 asked the respondents to indicate the degree of involvement (major, minor, none) of seven different individuals or groups: principal, teacher, parent, school psychologist, child, school promotion committee, superintendent of schools.

According to the response of 94% of the parents and 97% of the educators, the teacher should have major involvement in retention/promotion decisions. The parent according to 67% of parents and 66% of educators should also have major involvement. A majority (59%) of educators also felt the principal should have major involvement, whereas 40% of parents felt this way. Only 2% of educators and 2% of parents felt the superintendent should have major involvement.

When considering the degree of involvement (major and minor) it was clear that both parents and educators felt the teacher, parent, and principal were most significant in the retention/promotion decision. Some involvement by school psychologist, child, and school promotion committee was also considered of value. However, 80% of all parents and 66% of all educators felt there should be no involvement on the part of the superintendent. Of interest to us was the discovery that 37% of parents and 28% of educators felt the child should have major involvement in the retention decision. 55% of the parents and 45% of the educators felt the child should have minor involvement in the retention decision.

When parents were asked in item #28, "Who should have the FINAL SAY in promotion/retention decisions?" 37% responded with teacher, 20% with school promotion committee, and 14% with principal. Only 12% felt the parent should have the final say. On the other hand, 27% of educators felt the school promotion committee should have the final say, 25% suggested the principal, 24% indicated the teacher, and 16% said parent.

The one discrepancy we felt existed was that parents chose the school promotion committee as their second choice to make the final promotion/retention decision. Yet, for item #26 only 59% of parents indicated the school promotion committee should have some involvement in the retention/promotion decision. Judging from the questions posed about the composition of the committee we have made the assumption that those who did not wish to leave the FINAL SAY in the hands of one individual may have viewed the school promotion committee as a means of involving such individuals as teacher, principal, and parent.

Parent Comments

Although time restrictions did not allow for full scale parent interviews as in the case of educators, a number of parents did respond to the open ended section of our survey. Many of their comments are cited because of the insight they offer on issues relating to a retention/promotion decision.

- Elementary sports groups tend to draw negative attention to repeaters by insisting on age groups rather than grade groups.
- Staggered entrance (K-1) would likely eliminate potential repeaters. Some may begin in September, some in January. This would help to eliminate early frustration.
- There should be different retention/promotion policies for elementary and secondary levels of education.
- The age of a child should be considered when determining how much involvement a child should have in a retention/ promotion decision.
- Perhaps student failure is partly due to not enough channeling in high school. Perhaps more skills, rather than 'scholastic' achievement, could be emphasized to adequately prepare students for jobs. Many fairly bright students fail at university. Why do we point them in that direction when there are so few jobs available?
- So often there are 'grey areas' when making retention/ promotion decisions. The individual must always be considered.
- Obligatory and regular homework should be given especially in the face of possible retention.
- Some consideration should be given to physical maturity and social/behavioural adjustment, however, it does not have to be the major consideration
- No one should be retained for failing one subject
- There are residual effects of retention. Retention is inordinately socially damaging and encourages a lack of self-esteem and probably contributes to low achievement. Retention should only be considered in cases of severe immaturity, and academically only if every alternative has been exhausted.

. Not everyone should be promoted because "it is the thing to do". It should largely be the concern and involvement of the teacher, parent, and principal. At the teacher's and principal's discretion the child psychologist should be involved. It is not a concern of the superintendent.

. Students in high school should be promoted in their strong subjects, repeating weaker subjects as needed.

. While physical development can be quite varied, emotional maturity must be the deciding factor. Too often children who look older than they are have had expectations placed on them that they aren't ready for.

. Automatic promotion guarantees that a significant percentage of students will decide they don't have to work, and with exceptions, the general achievement level will drop. Automatic promotion is one of the most emotionally destructive school policies imaginable . It is a case of one step forward and two steps back.

. Putting anyone, at any age, in any situation for which they have not mastered the necessary skills, guarantees that they will feel stupid, unworthy, incompetent, resentful of authority and they may give up. Thereafter they take the path of least resistance, their lives governed by "I can't".

. Personally successful and emotionally secure adults are those who learned as children that rewards are to be earned, that failure and disappointment are part of life, to be accepted and overcome, and if at first you don't succeed you try, try, and try again.

. Teachers should make the major retention/promotion decisions since they deal with the child on a daily basis. If there is a problem in making the decision then the principal and parents should be consulted.

. The support a child receives at home is important. If made to believe he is not intelligent then repetition will reinforce this opinion but if the student realizes that everyone has areas that come easier than others and that it is in his best interests to stick with it until it is mastered, then the student will not have negative feelings about himself.

. Physical maturity should be a consideration particularly in grade six and seven, but not a major factor. Children develop so quickly in these grades that to have a 13 or 14 year old in elementary school will have a decidedly negative effect on self-esteem. Physical maturity should not play a part in high school since most classes have a varied age group.

Summary of Teacher Interviews

To supplement the attitude survey, we felt there would be value in talking to educators with a special interest in the retention/promotion issue. From these interviews, we hoped to get a better perspective on the effects of retention in particular cases, an overview of trends teachers had observed in promotion/retention policies and an indication of the directions teachers would like to see things take.

Thirty-one teachers indicated a willingness to share their opinions, concerns and suggestions about promotion/retention. From these, we selected eight teachers whose experience at various grade levels would make their comments representative of other teachers. Three of the teachers were from primary grades, two from kindergarten and one from a split grade one/two class. Two teachers worked at the intermediate level (grades 4 and 5) and three worked at the secondary level.

We asked all teachers who were interviewed to respond to a common core of questions. (See Appendix H) In addition, each person was free to comment on any aspect of the promotion/ retention issue upon which he/she wanted to express an opinion or make a point. What follows is a synopsis of their shared views as well as individual observations.

Without exception, teachers interviewed mentioned immaturity as figuring prominently in most retention decisions. This was particularly true at the kindergarten level where a "time for maturing" was felt to be more important than any capacity or skill. Interestingly enough, social immaturity was also seen as a major cause for retention at the grade seven level. Other factors identified were not achieving at grade level or according to the expected standard (often the case at the end of grade one) or, in some cases, due to behaviour problems. At the secondary level, the main cause for retention was lack of effort or poor attendance.

Most teachers felt that retention could encourage learning but only if certain conditions were met. If encouragement is provided, if the retention decision is made in consultation with the parents and the student, and if the program addresses the reasons why the student did not meet success the first time, then benefit can come from retention. Adopting a "continuous learning program" (such as the four-year primary program) could be effective and benefitial for some. Certainly, it was agreed that the consequences of retention for the individual child must be carefully evaluated before the decision is made.

Although all the teachers interviewed had retained students at some time in their careers, the numbers were very small. The primary teachers preferred not to speak of "retention" but rather of "continuing" with a program. As a group, they wanted to avoid labels of failure and felt that the success of "continuing" with a program hinged on the parents' support for the decision. Also, if the student felt comfortable with the younger peer group and if the retention is approached in such a way as to avoid any social stigma, then it can be effective.

When asked if a single student stood out and why, the responses were understandably varied. Several teachers commented on kindergarten situations that worked out very well. They cited full parental support and the fact that the students in question were "late fall" birthdays (seen as "too young" and needing time to mature) as reasons why these were successful. Another teacher mentioned a situation where she was able to work again with two students the following year, picking up where they had left off the previous year. This "continuing" of a program proved very effective for the individuals concerned.

There were other situations that stood out, however, for different reasons. In one case, the parents were opposed to their child repeating kindergarten, but went along with the recommendation of the school. The teacher who inherited this situation the next year felt the parents were constantly undermining what she was trying to do with the child and termed the year "a disaster" for the child. Another teacher mentioned the grade seven boy who had not reached the expected level of achievement, was small physically, had a December birthday and didn't fit in with his grade seven class at all. The resulting retention was well-intentioned and supported by the parents. What no one was able to predict, however, was that the boy would go into a growth-spurt halfway through the repeated year and that for the rest of the year he would suffer socially even if he gained academically.

One point became clear: the decision to retain or have a student continue with a grade was one over which all the teachers had agonized yet even with the best of intentions and based on the most reliable information available, the element of doubt remained as to whether or not the right decision had been made.

The biggest danger in a retention decision, teachers felt, was in the effect this could have on the student's self-concept. Since school failure is so often seen as social failure, students often feel uncomfortable and out of place with their new classmates. For these reasons, kindergarten teachers in particular felt that if a student is to continuie in a grade for a second year, that grade should be kindergarten because the non-pressure situation in an atmosphere were the child does not see himself/herself as a failure, give the best chance for success. Approached in this way and with parental support, some children capitalize on their "retention" and pride themselves on "being the oldest" in the class.

On the question of whether or not boys and girls are dealt with equally, there was unanimity--there is definitely a difference in treatment. Boys are less ready to start school at the age we expect. Their fine motor skills are also less developed because society nurtures boys differently. Particularly if they have a fall birthday, boys have a harder time conforming to school and teacher expectations (sit still, listen, etc.) Boys are taught to be aggressive whereas girls are encouraged to be passive. As a result, many more boys are retained in kindergarten and grade one--the system just doesn't accommodate boys very well. There seems to be more awareness of these differences and attempts are being made to deal with them, but certainly, the "young" boy is much more at risk.

Over their teaching careers, these teachers observed many changes in dealing with promotion and retention. Although it was difficult to generalize about "trends" since there are differences from teacher to teacher, school to school and district to district, yet certain observations were noteworthy. Most teachers felt that we had come a long way from the rigid, lock-step system of earlier years. With greater flexibility and the smaller class sizes of a few years ago, teachers were able to deal more effectively with individual differences. The advent of special services and learning assistance gave teachers more freedom to avoid retaining students while still providing for their needs. With better support systems, more monitoring of individual students and better identification of students with learning difficulties, the number of retentions decreased significantly. Also, social considerations began to play a part in the promotion/retention decision, again resulting in fewer retentions. As a result, many students have been able to experience success and graduation has become more accessible.

With a move in recent years towards larger class sizes, teachers felt that individual differences will no longer be dealt with as effectively and there will be a move back to "teaching to the middle". There was also a concern expressed that the emphasis on government exams will force us back to curriculum-based education.

All teachers agreed that their views on promotion/retention had changed considerably since they started teaching. One had gone from a "no one should be retained" philosophy to "maybe it is needed for some". Another used to hold that a certain percentage of students would profit from retention. Now she feels a student MIGHT profit from retention but only if planning goes into the program and if the student is not just dumped back into the same grade to repeated the same material. Most were inclined now to look at the total child: Will another year help? What psychological effects might there be? Is retention in the child's best interests? There was also a readiness to re-assess a situation and adapt a program as required. This grew out of an awareness that a promotion/ retention decision is not an easy one and that what is perceived to be in the child's best interests is not always so.

When asked in what direction they would like to see things go, teachers had several suggestions. Many advocated a system of "continuous learning" to remove the barriers between grades and thereby reduce the number of retentions. As part of the concern about the student's self-concept, several emphasized that the vocabulary of "failure" needs to be removed. Considering the impact a retention may have on a student, there was a general feeling that parents had to be involved and that they needed to support the decision. Several mentioned that the decision to retain a student should involve more than one person--a "promotion committee" of parents, teachers, counsellors and administrators.

Other points raised were that promotion should be an ongoing process, that students who are retained should be reviewed regularly throughout the year to see if the placement is still suitable. Furthermore, before a student is retained, a "contingency plan" should be developed to provide for the student when he no longer fits in socially with the students in his class.

These observations and suggestions came from people who were, by and large, not too familiar with recent research on promotion/retention. Most were interested in knowing what that research had to say but admitted that time restraints prevented them from following up that interest. Those who were familiar with the literature were generally less supportive of retention but were willing to accept that there are circumstances when it may have a legitimate function.

What follows are comments made by individual teachers. These are included to give further perspectives on promotion and retention.

.The whole promotion/retention issue is one teachers agonize over most because we realize our evaluation process is imperfect. It is not an easy decision because teachers are aware of the implications when a student is failed.

.If a teacher really sees a child as "continuing" rather repeating a grade, the teacher working with the parents and child can avoid damage to the child's self-image.

.Language structures thought. We must be very intentional about our words and actions and avoid the language of failure.

.More attention should be given to birthdates. At times children enter school before they are ready and this can be a serious disadvantage.

.Look at the developmental age of a child, not just the chronological age for school entry.

.If a child leaves kindergarten not feeling good about himself/herself and with a feeling of "I can't", this will affect his whole outlook on learning.

.Some children have difficulty throughout school because they experienced too much failure somewhere along the way.

.I was accelerated as a child and have always felt in some way that I "gained" a year. Does a student who failed a year feel as if he/she "lost" a year of his/her life?

.Whatever the decision (promotion or retention), without parental support, it is not likely to be successful.

CONCLUSIONS

Having completed our research and having tabulated the results of local data, we feel that certain general conclusions can be drawn. Although for us many issues have been clarified by our findings and our review of the literature, we caution against over interpretation of the results, for at best, research can only reflect tendencies.

We began with the premise that there was a need to determine how parents and educators felt about many of the issues that surround a decision to promote or retain a child. Through our survey items and our teacher interviews we were able to determine there are many shared philosophies and practices. It became quite evident to us that a substantial majority of parents and educators believe that retention has a legitimate function in our school system. It would also be fair to say that retention occurs purposefully for it carries with it the best intentions of many educators and parents.

Given the assumption that retention has value, we felt it important to establish why it is sometimes recommended. Our survey proposed that retention occurs to reduce the range of abilities in a class, to motivate the student to work harder, or to foster mastery of skills. Although given some support, as significant reasons for retention, these were not widely accepted by parents and educators. What became clear was that, according to both groups, the single overriding benefit of retention is that it provides a child with more time to mature socially and behaviourally.

Another conclusion we drew from our data was that there has been a trend away from the wide-spread retention practices of the earliest sample years. Gone are the days when a student spends three years in grade four, or repeats grade one, grade two, and grade four. More and more, social and behavioural adjustment is the major consideration in the promotion/retention decision. Furthermore, retention when used now occurs primarily at kindergarten and grade one. The opinion of the survey group is that retention at these levels is most beneficial in helping young people to mature without experiencing the stigma of "failure" so often associated with retention at higher grades. In fact, retention rarely takes place at the intermediate level, and, although both parents and educators clearly objected to "automatic promotion" from grade seven to eight, district statistics indicate retention of grade seven students is virtually a non-existent practice. Particularly if the concept of the 'four year primary program' were endorsed and if children could be made to feel that they were merely continuing with their program rather than being retained, then retention could be successful and would be less likely to damage a child's self-concept.

Several other issues stand out when surveying the work we have done. When asked if grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student would dropout before graduation, only 27% of parents and 39% of educators agreed. Yet clearly we discovered figures that were too alarming to ignore. Granted there might be several reasons for a correlation between retention in elementary school and failure to graduate, however, we cannot overlook the fact that of all records we examined only one student who had been retained twice in elementary school graduated. Almost half (49.1%) of all non-graduates had repeated at least one grade. Conversely only 11.7% of all graduates had ever repeated a grade. Clearly, too, as the percentage of retentions decreased, the number of graduates increased. We submit that the decisions to retain are still being made, but are no less agonizing than they have ever been. Perhaps the difference is a more insightful group of educators, a clearer grasp of the issues involved, and an educational system that is more accommodating of individual needs.

Recent trends in education have demonstrated that education is more accessible to a greater number of people. The potential for graduation appears to be greater than it has ever been. Several factors have played a role in bringing this about. In recent years, smaller classes had allowed for more frequent pupil-teacher interaction. The introduction of Special Services has made provision for many students disadvantaged by physical, social or learning disabilities. Finally, learning assistance programs have given tremendous support to those students experiencing difficulty in fundamental areas of study such as language arts and arithmetic. As a result, perhaps, graduation is now viewed as being more accessible with the consequence that a higher premium than ever before has been placed on school completion. The trend, therefore, has been not only towards a higher percentage of graduates but also towards a later withdrawal year for students who 'dropout'. (In the earliest year of our study the largest number of dropouts occurred in grade ten; in more recent years the largest number left school in grade eleven.) As authors of this project, we would like to point out that in the earliest years of our study the large percentage of dropouts appear to have been accommodated quite readily in the work force. With a declining economy and resulting widespread unemployment, such is not the case today. A society that places such value on education must be prepared to provde support, resources and direction not only for those who are in school but also for those who do not achieve high school graduation.

Another issue that warrants attention is the discrepancy between the percentage of males and females retained in school--almost twice as many males as females are retained. An imbalance also exists between the percentage of male and female graduates. In our interviews it became apparent time and time again that we do not live in a genderless society. Often we heard the comment that schools are not made for little boys. Their nurturing emphasizes practical, "hands on" education which puts them at a distinct disadvantage when compared to girls whose fine motor skills have been developed to a much higher degree. Despite the fact that our education system has made great strides since the earliest years of our study, the disproportionate percentage of male retentions to female retentions suggests this is still an area that should be addressed. A partial solution may exist in the 'four year primary program' advocated by many we interviewed or in flexible school entry based on behavioural age. This may better accommodate the social adjustment needs of our students than the present chronological-age entry practice.

Ultimately, the identification of students who would benefit from retention must be made on an individual basis. Research indicated that the following factors were associated with successful retention: parental support for the decision, chronological or developmental immaturity, normal intelligence, good social and emotional adjustment and average academic skills. (Stiles, 1983) In order to avoid inconsistencies and to ensure the best decision, many researchers recommend the adoption of a uniform promotion policy. Our survey clearly indicated that both parents and educators (73%) saw the need for such a policy in School District #72.

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

> "School districts with written promotional policies (tend to) have flexible standards that take into account individual variation."
> (Rose, Medway, Cantrell & Marus, 1983, p.203)

Much research substantiates the claim that a formal policy helps to provide for consistency in promotion/retention decisions. This is not to say that every case does not merit individual attention but rather that research can offer guidelines that will result in the best decision for the child. Our study leads us to conclude that there are a number of factors that should be considered if School District #72 wishes to adopt a uniform promotion/retention policy.

It is not our intention to suggest that the proposals we make in any way indicate a lack of faith in the present promotion/retention practices of this school district. Clearly the decision to retain a child is one that is weighed heavily by teachers and principals alike. The fact that in a total population of 3706 elementary students (September, 1984) only 21 students were retained is significant. It is hoped that the observations and suggestions which follow will be considered to have some value in the formulation of a district policy.

Most policy statements make reference to one or more of four basic factors: (a) students' current achievement level; (b) personal and home factors such as chronological age, social maturity, physical development, and parental attitudes; (c) what is 'in the best interests of the student'; and (d) the number of times the student has been retained.

To begin, it seems evident from the results of our survey that parents and educators favour the use of a school promotion committee. People seemed uncomfortable with the suggestion that the sole responsibility of a promotion/retention decision rests with one person. Thus a committee would allow for input from a number of people concerned with the welfare of the child. Without question the teacher, principal, school psychologist (counsellor) and parent should be considered as vital members of such a committee. Depending on the age and maturity of the child, consideration might be given to including him/her in the decision making process.

Secondly, we recommend that promotion/retention decisions be reviewed on an ongoing basis. This appears to happen in many schools presently and has certainly accommodated the "continuous progress" advocated by many teachers. As secondary counsellors we have from time to time made the decision to upgrade overage students by placing them in the next grade or developing a program which allows them to complete three years in two. Although this practice is not widespread, in most cases the results have been very positive. This brings us to the conclusion that the same energy and time devoted to retention decisions should also be given to promotion decisions. Once "immaturity" is no longer a factor, it may indeed be possible for a student to deal more readily with academic tasks of the next higher level. We recommend that the progress of any student who has been retained be reviewed at regular intervals throughout the year to determine if the placement is still appropriate.

We recognize that there are specific times when retention may be beneficial. In keeping with our survey responses we submit that the most appropriate time for retention is at the primary level, particularly in the kindergarten or grade one years when retention seems to fulfill its most important function: allowing students (particularly boys) more time to mature. We further suggest that retention at the intermediate level be approached with extreme caution, especially at the grade seven level. Too often rapid physical maturation in the repeated year creates new problems for the young boy who suddenly realizes he is in a class of "younger children". Furthermore, the specialized programs, variety of teachers and expanded peer group at the secondary school often provide a much needed stimulus. If June 1984 retention figures are any indication, this practice of very selective retention at the elementary level is already the case.

Specific objectives to be achieved by retention should be clearly stated and discussed with parents. A student's reaction to retention depends greatly on how the adults involved in the decision handle it. Unless the parents view retention as a positive step, the child may very likely perceive it as punishment and his self-concept may suffer damage. We recommend, therefore, that well before the decision is made to retain a child, parents be informed of apparent difficulties and meetings take place to keep them aware of the child's progress. (See Appendix J) It is paramount that the decision not be viewed as an absolute but rather as part of an ongoing process that is ready to accommodate changes in the child. Thus it is important that dialogue between parent and school be encouraged in order to ensure that the student's placement remains appropriate to his/her needs.

One further consideration might be the school entry age of students (especially boys). Provision for flexible or delayed entry would enable the individual student to adapt to school more readily. Given the many variables that affect school readiness, it does not seem to make sense that every student born on the same day is necessarily equally prepared to begin his/her education. Behavioural age rather than chronological age should be a major consideration.

Too often, suggestions are of an abstract nature. Research can be put to real use only if it can be applied practically. Light's retention scale deserves careful consideration in this regard (see Appendix I) because it is a tool that provides guidelines for discussion of many factors in a child's development and school performance. Included are such factors as attendance, ability, achievement, physical development, parent's attitudes about retention and behaviour problems at home or at school. This objective scale has merit, we feel, because of its research base. We recommend that in developing a district promotion policy, it be given careful consideration. It is has already proven useful in some school districts (Courtenay, for example). Certainly, as Light states, this scale should not be used as the sole criterion in determining whether or not a child should be retained. However, it has particular value in that it can be used to discuss the advantages and disadvantages of retention for a particular student and will usually help establish rapport with a parent.

In summary, the recommendations we wish to put forth for consideration in the formulation of a uniform district promotion/retention policy are the following:

1. A promotion committee to be established in each school
2. A retention decision, once made, to be reviewed on an ongoing basis to ensure it remains appropriate
3. "Continuous progress" to be encouraged in the primary grades
4. Retention, if deemed necessary, to take place at the primary level (preferably in kindergarten or grade one)
5. Retention at the intermediate level to be seriously questioned
6. Parental involvement to be actively encouraged before, during and after retention decisions
7. Serious consideration to be given to the adoption of a flexible school entry policy based on behavioural rather than chronological age

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Student Data Recording Form

Student Data Recording Form

Birthdate Year: Year of Entry:

Entry Year	Name	Birthdate	Grad/ Non-grad	Year Left	Last Grade	Grade Rep.

APPENDIX B

'Graduate' Tally Form

"Graduate" Tally Form

Birthdate: 1953 Grad Year: 1971			Birthdate: 1959 Grad Year: 1977			Birthdate: 1965 Grad Year: 1983		
M	F	Gr. Rep.	M	F	Gr. Rep.	M	F	Gr. Rep.

APPENDIX C

'Non-Graduate' Tally Form

"Non-Graduate" Tally Form

Birthdate: 1953 Birthdate: 1959 Birthdate: 1965
Grad Year: 1971 Grad Year: 1977 Grad Year: 1983

M	Last Gr.	Gr. Rep	F	Last Gr.	Gr. Rep	M	Last Gr.	Gr. Rep	F	Last Gr.	Gr. Rep	M	Last Gr.	Gr. Rep	F	Last Gr.	Gr. Rep

APPENDIX D

Survey

GRADE REPETITION STUDY:

SURVEY

The following survey is a significant part of a Master's project designed with the following objective in mind:

> to determine attitudes of parents, teachers and administrators towards present promotion/retention practices in School District No. 72.

The results will be tabulated to indicate feelings about promotion/retention in this district and should also provide useful information should a district promotion/retention policy be considered.

Your help in completing this survey would be greatly appreciated.

Before completing the survey, please provide the following background information:

(Mark all answers on the computer sheet)

I I will be responding to the survey primarily as a

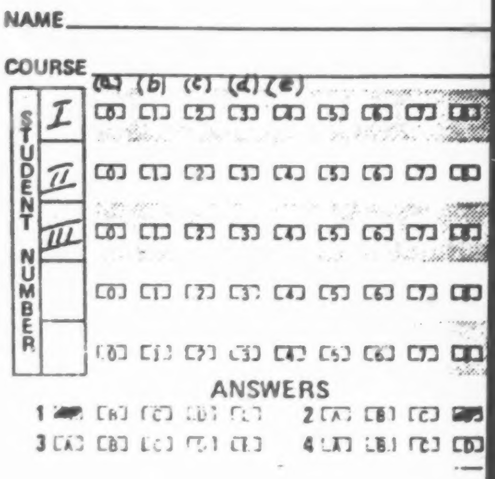
(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
Parent	Teacher	Counsellor	Administrator	Other

II My main interest is in the following level(s) of education.
(You may choose more than one)

(a)	(b)	(c)
Primary	Intermediate	Secondary
(K-3)	(4-7)	(8-12)

III IF A TEACHER, years of teaching experience, as of September 1, 1984.
(If not a teacher, please leave blank)

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)
0-1	2-5	6-15	15 or more



NAME

COURSE

(a) (b) (c) (d) (e)

STUDENT NUMBER

I [0] [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

II [0] [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

III [0] [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

[0] [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

[0] [1] [2] [3] [4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

ANSWERS

1 ● [B] [C] [D] [E] 2 [A] [B] [C] ●

3 [A] [B] [C] [D] [E] 4 [A] [B] [C] [D]

Please complete the survey by responding to each statement.
Mark the computer sheet according to the scale provided:

SCALE

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
YES	yes	undecided	no	**NO**
(strongly agree)	(agree)	(undecided)	(disagree)	(strongly disagree)

SAMPLE:

Two sample statements are given below:

A. A principal and staff should develop a mutually acceptable promotional policy.

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
[✓ YES]	yes	undecided	no	NO

EXPLANATION:

'YES' indicates a strong conviction that principal and staff should jointly create an acceptable promotion policy.

B. Secondary promotion should be by grade level as opposed to subject.

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
YES	yes	undecided	[✓ no]	NO

EXPLANATION:

'no' expresses a belief that secondary promotion should not be by grade level; however, some value in repetition of the grade might be possible.

SURVEY

		(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)
1.	Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
2.	Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
3.	Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
4.	If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3)	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
5.	Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
6.	If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
7.	School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
8.	Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
9.	Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
10.	Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
11.	In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
12.	At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
13.	Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
14.	Retention has a legitimate function in our present eductional system.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
15.	Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
16.	Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
17.	Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
18.	Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
19.	Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
20.	Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO

Please indicate how involved EACH of the following individuals or groups should be in deciding whether or not to retain or promote a child.

		(a) Major Involvement	(b) Minor Involvement	(c) No Involvement
21.	Principal	(a)	(b)	(c)
22.	Teacher	(a)	(b)	(c)
23.	Parent	(a)	(b)	(c)
24.	School psychologist	(a)	(b)	(c)
25.	Child	(a)	(b)	(c)
26.	School promotion committee	(a)	(b)	(c)
27.	Superintendent of Schools	(a)	(b)	(c)

For 28. or 29. select ONE ONLY of the SEVEN possibilities.

Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY in promotion/retention decisions?

28.	(a) Principal	(b) Teacher	(c) Parent	(d) School psychologist	(e) Child
29.	(a) School Promotion Committee	(b) Superintendent of Schools			

APPENDIX E

Retention/Promotion Survey Follow-Up

RETENTION/PROMOTION SURVEY FOLLOW-UP

This is a completely voluntary portion of the survey. We would value any comments you might have. We would encourage you to complete the following sections.

CONTENT

I feel that the following concerns were not addressed in the survey:

REACTION

Please circle the most appropriate response.

1. The survey was an acceptable length.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
2. The questions were clear and understandable.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
3. There was a good sampling of questions pertaining to the promotion/retention issue.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO
4. The questions provided a 'fair' opportunity to express a clear opinion on the promotion/retention issue.	YES	yes	undecided	no	NO

INTERVIEW

As part of our research we would also like to interview several educators who would be willing to share their opinion, concerns, suggestions..... about promotion/retention. If you would be interested in sharing your views please write your name in the space provided. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

Name

Phone

APPENDIX F

Letter to Parents

PHOENIX SECONDARY SCHOOL

SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 72 (CAMPBELL RIVER)

R.L. Toutant
Principal
E.G. Beck
Vice-Principal

Telephone 287-8346
400 - 7th Avenue,
Campbell River, B.C.
V9W 3Z9

Feb. 25, 1985

Dear Parent:

As part of a Master's of Education degree in school counselling, Craig Gillis (counsellor at Southgate Secondary) and I are involved in a project studying the effects of grade repetition. As part of this study, we are conducting a survey to "determine attitudes of administrators, teachers and parents towards present promotion and retention practices in School District #72."

We would be grateful if you would take the time to respond to this survey. All questions are to be answered in pencil on the computer card provided. (Note: Please respond to either #28 or #29 but not both.)

Once completed, the survey may be left in the office or returned with your son/daughter. We are hoping to begin tabulation of the results by March 2, so please ensure that the survey is returned by Friday, Mar. 1.

Thank you for helping us. Your opinions will be a vital part of our study.

Sincerely,

W E Biegler

W. E. Biegler
Counsellor--Phoenix Secondary

APPENDIX G

Analysis of Survey Results

Analysis of Survey Results

TABLES

SURVEY GROUP	RAW DATA	PERCENTAGE
Parents	Table 1a	Table 1b
Total Population	Table 2a	Table 2b
Administrators	Table 3a	Table 3b
Primary Teachers	Table 4a	Table 4b
Primary Teachers (2-5 years)	Table 5a	Table 5b
Primary Teachers (6-15 years)	Table 6a	Table 6b
Primary Teachers (15 or more)	Table 7a	Table 7b
Intermediate Teachers	Table 8a	Table 8b
Intermediate Teachers (2-5 years)	Table 9a	Table 9b
Intermediate Teachers (6-15 yearS)	Table 10a	Table 10b
Intermediate Teachers (15 or more)	Table 11a	Table 11b
Secondary Teachers	Table 12a	Table 12b
Secondary Teachers (2-5 years)	Table 13a	Table 13b
Secondary Teachers (6-15 years)	Table 14a	Table 14b
Secondary Teachers (15 or more)	Table 15a	Table 15b

TABLE 1a: SURVEY--Parents (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	8	17	5	13	9	52
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	10	32	4	4	2	52
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	18	21	6	5	1	51
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	19	21	6	5	1	52
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	15	22	7	4	4	52
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	4	4	7	25	12	52
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	18	20	6	6	2	52
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	8	19	12	12	1	52
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	2	2	4	19	25	52
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	3	8	3	19	19	52
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	3	8	8	20	13	52
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	1	5	16	20	10	52
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	5	9	9	25	4	52
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	19	23	8	0	2	52
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	2	10	8	22	10	52
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	2	18	14	13	4	51
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	9	31	3	7	2	52
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	19	15	4	10	4	52
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	2	11	28	8	1	50
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	21	26	1	3	0	51
21. Principal................................	20	27	3	0	0	50
22. Teacher................................	47	3	0	0	0	50
23. Parent................................	34	15	2	0	0	51
24. School Psychologist......................	14	28	8	0	0	50
25. Child................................	19	23	9	0	0	51
26. School Promotion Committee...............	10	19	20	0	0	49
27. Superintendent of Schools................	1	9	41	0	0	51
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	8	22	7	1	2	40
	12	7				19

TABLE 1b: SURVEY--Parents (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	15	33	10	25	17
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	19	62	8	8	4
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	35	41	12	10	2
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	37	40	12	10	2
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	29	42	13	8	8
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	8	8	13	48	23
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	35	38	12	12	4
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	15	37	23	23	2
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	4	4	8	37	48
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	6	15	6	37	37
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	6	15	15	38	25
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	2	10	31	38	19
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	10	17	17	48	8
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	37	44	15	0	4
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	4	19	15	42	19
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	4	35	27	25	8
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	17	60	6	13	4
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	37	29	8	19	8
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	4	22	56	16	2
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	41	51	2	6	0
21. Principal................................	40	54	6	0	0
22. Teacher..................................	94	6	0	0	0
23. Parent...................................	67	29	4	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	28	56	16	0	0
25. Child....................................	37	45	18	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	20	39	41	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	2	18	80	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	14	37	12	2	3
	20	12			

TABLE 2a: SURVEY--Total Population (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	48	96	17	36	5	202
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	23	118	28	29	6	204
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	68	89	19	23	4	203
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	91	55	30	21	7	204
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	85	66	22	23	7	203
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	1	6	14	84	99	204
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	86	63	22	19	14	204
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	32	84	47	32	8	203
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	13	26	25	77	63	204
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	3	13	23	78	84	201
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	20	39	49	70	26	204
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	18	59	64	45	18	204
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	25	55	50	58	16	204
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	46	104	32	15	6	203
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	4	40	35	89	36	204
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	8	43	54	65	33	203
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	33	122	27	15	5	202
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	15	52	32	79	25	203
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	1	10	91	57	40	199
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	25	77	16	65	20	203
21. Principal..................................	117	80	1	0	0	198
22. Teacher..................................	192	5	0	0	0	197
23. Parent..................................	132	64	4	0	0	200
24. School Psychologist......................	39	136	23	0	0	198
25. Child..................................	55	109	35	0	0	199
26. School Promotion Committee..............	75	96	26	0	0	197
27. Superintendent of Schools................	3	63	128	0	0	194
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	55	53	36	6	9	159
	59	6				

TABLE 2b: SURVEY--Total Population (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	24	48	8	18	2
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	11	58	14	14	3
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	33	44	9	11	2
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	45	27	15	10	3
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	42	33	11	11	3
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	3	7	41	49
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	42	31	11	9	7
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	16	41	23	16	4
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	6	13	12	38	31
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	1	6	11	39	42
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	10	19	24	34	13
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	9	29	31	22	9
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	12	27	25	28	8
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	23	51	16	7	3
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	2	20	17	44	18
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	4	21	27	32	16
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	16	60	13	7	2
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	7	26	16	39	12
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	1	5	46	29	20
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	12	38	8	32	10
21. Principal................................	59	40	1	0	0
22. Teacher................................	97	3	0	0	0
23. Parent................................	66	32	2	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	20	69	12	0	0
25. Child................................	28	55	18	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee..............	38	49	13	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	2	32	66	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	25	24	16	3	4
	26	4			

TABLE 3a: SURVEY--Administrators (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	6	8	2	8	1	25
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	3	13	6	2	1	25
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	10	6	0	6	3	25
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	11	6	4	2	2	25
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	10	7	5	2	1	25
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	1	10	14	25
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	12	6	3	3	1	25
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	4	10	6	2	3	25
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	3	8	3	6	5	25
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	4	4	9	7	24
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	7	9	1	5	3	25
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	8	8	3	4	2	25
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	11	6	2	3	3	25
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	8	8	2	6	1	25
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	2	4	9	10	25
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	2	3	5	9	6	25
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	4	17	1	1	2	25
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	0	2	4	8	11	25
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	2	6	17	25
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	1	8	1	10	4	24
21. Principal..................................	21	3	0	0	0	24
22. Teacher....................................	22	1	0	0	0	23
23. Parent.....................................	16	8	0	0	0	24
24. School Psychologist........................	4	17	2	0	0	23
25. Child......................................	10	8	6	0	0	24
26. School Promotion Committee..................	9	11	3	0	0	23
27. Superintendent of Schools..................	1	8	15	0	0	24
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	12	1	2	1	2	18
	4	4				8

TABLE 3b: SURVEY--Administrators (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	24	32	8	32	4
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	12	52	24	8	4
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	40	24	0	24	12
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	44	24	16	8	8
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	40	28	20	8	4
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	4	40	56
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	48	24	12	12	4
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	16	40	24	8	12
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	12	32	12	24	20
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	17	17	38	29
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	28	36	4	20	12
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	32	32	12	16	8
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	44	24	8	12	12
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	32	32	8	24	4
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	8	16	36	40
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	8	12	20	36	24
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	16	68	4	4	8
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	0	8	16	32	44
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	8	24	68
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	4	33	4	42	17
21. Principal..............................	88	13	0	0	0
22. Teacher..............................	96	4	0	0	0
23. Parent..............................	67	33	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist....................	17	74	9	0	0
25. Child..............................	42	33	25	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee..............	39	48	13	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools..............	4	33	63	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	46	4	8	4	8
	15	15			

TABLE 4a: SURVEY--Primary Teachers (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	22	29	3	8	2	64
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	4	37	9	13	2	65
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	24	28	9	3	0	64
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	34	23	4	4	0	65
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	27	25	5	5	2	64
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	1	1	2	31	30	65
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	26	21	6	5	7	65
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	9	24	16	14	1	64
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	2	11	12	23	17	65
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	6	22	36	64
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	6	9	20	24	6	65
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	5	19	22	14	5	65
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	8	12	15	23	7	65
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	10	33	17	3	1	64
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	12	4	36	13	65
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	1	7	15	26	15	64
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	9	40	7	6	1	63
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	5	16	12	26	6	65
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	3	31	18	10	62
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	7	32	4	16	6	65
21. Principal..................................	35	29	0	0	0	64
22. Teacher..................................	66	0	0	0	0	66
23. Parent..................................	53	12	0	0	0	65
24. School Psychologist..........................	15	44	6	0	0	65
25. Child..................................	20	38	8	0	0	66
26. School Promotion Committee................	20	34	9	0	0	63
27. Superintendent of Schools.................	0	21	43	0	0	64
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	12	22	13	2	5	54
	15	0				15

TABLE 4b: SURVEY--Primary Teachers (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	34	45	5	13	3
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	6	57	14	20	3
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	38	44	14	5	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	52	35	6	6	0
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	42	39	8	8	3
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	2	2	3	48	46
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	40	32	9	8	11
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	14	38	25	22	2
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	3	17	18	35	26
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	9	34	56
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	9	14	31	37	9
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	8	29	34	22	8
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	12	18	23	35	11
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	16	52	27	5	2
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	18	6	55	20
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	2	11	23	41	23
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	14	63	11	10	2
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	8	25	18	40	9
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	5	50	29	16
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	11	49	6	25	9
21. Principal................................	55	45	0	0	0
22. Teacher................................	00	0	0	0	0
23. Parent................................	82	18	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	23	68	9	0	0
25. Child....................................	30	58	12	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	32	54	14	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	33	67	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	17	32	19	3	7
	22	0			

TABLE 5a: SURVEY--Primary Teachers, 2-5 yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	1	6	0	2	0	9
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	1	5	1	3	0	10
3. Social/Behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	2	5	2	1	0	10
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	2	6	0	2	0	10
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	5	4	0	1	0	10
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	0	7	3	10
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	4	4	1	1	0	10
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	0	3	1	6	0	10
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	3	0	5	2	10
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	0	4	6	10
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	0	1	2	7	0	10
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	3	4	3	0	10
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	0	2	7	1	10
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	1	8	1	0	0	10
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	2	1	5	2	10
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	0	3	7	0	10
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	0	8	0	1	1	10
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	2	4	2	2	0	10
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	6	3	0	9
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	1	9	0	0	0	10
21. Principal..................................	6	4	0	0	0	10
22. Teacher......................................	10	0	0	0	0	10
23. Parent....................................	6	4	0	0	0	10
24. School Psychologist......................	3	6	1	0	0	10
25. Child.....................................	2	8	0	0	0	10
26. School Promotion Committee...............	3	6	1	0	0	10
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	1	9	0	0	10
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	3	5	1	1	0	10
	1	0				1

TABLE 5b: SURVEY--Primary Teachers, 2-5 yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	11	67	0	22	0
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	10	50	10	30	0
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	20	50	20	10	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	20	60	0	20	0
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	50	40	0	10	0
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	0	70	30
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	40	40	10	10	0
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	0	30	10	60	0
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	30	0	50	20
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	0	40	60
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	0	10	20	70	0
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	30	40	30	0
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	0	20	70	10
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	10	80	10	0	0
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	20	10	50	20
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	0	30	70	0
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	0	80	0	10	10
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	20	40	20	20	0
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	67	33	0
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	10	90	0	0	0
21. Principal..................................	60	40	0	0	0
22. Teacher..................................	100	0	0	0	0
23. Parent..................................	60	40	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	30	60	10	0	0
25. Child..................................	20	80	0	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee..............	30	60	10	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	10	90	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	27	45	9	9	0
	9	0			

TABLE 6a: SURVEY--Primary Teachers, 6-15 yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	11	15	2	3	2	33
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	0	18	6	7	2	33
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	11	14	6	1	0	32
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	16	14	1	2	0	33
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	15	14	2	1	1	33
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	1	0	14	18	33
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	14	10	3	2	4	33
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	5	14	10	4	0	33
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	1	4	6	12	10	33
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	1	12	19	32
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	4	6	10	9	4	33
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	4	10	10	7	2	33
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	5	7	7	11	3	33
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	6	16	8	2	1	33
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	6	1	19	7	33
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	6	7	10	10	33
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	6	18	6	3	0	33
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	2	8	5	14	4	33
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	2	15	8	7	32
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	3	15	1	9	5	33
21. Principal..................................	18	14	0	0	0	32
22. Teacher..................................	33	0	0	0	0	33
23. Parent..................................	26	7	0	0	0	33
24. School Psychologist......................	7	22	4	0	0	33
25. Child..................................	5	21	6	0	0	32
26. School Promotion Committee...............	14	12	6	0	0	32
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	10	23	0	0	33
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	6	8	9	0	0	23
	12	0	0	0	0	12

TABLE 6b: SURVEY--Primary Teachers, 6-15 yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	33	45	6	9	6
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	0	55	18	21	6
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	34	44	19	3	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	48	42	3	6	0
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	45	42	6	3	3
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	3	0	42	55
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	42	30	9	6	12
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	15	42	30	12	0
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	3	12	18	36	30
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	3	38	59
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	12	18	30	27	12
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	12	30	30	21	6
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	15	21	21	33	9
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	18	48	24	6	3
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	18	3	58	21
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	18	21	30	30
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	18	55	18	9	0
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	6	24	15	42	12
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	6	47	25	22
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	9	45	3	27	15
21. Principal..................................	56	44	0	0	0
22. Teacher..........?......................	00	0	0	0	0
23. Parent..................................	79	21	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	21	67	12	0	0
25. Child..................................	16	66	19	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	44	38	19	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	30	70	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	17	23	26	0	0
	34	0			

TABLE 7a: SURVEY--Primary Teachers, 15 or more yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	11	7	1	3	0	22
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	3	14	2	3	0	22
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	11	9	1	1	0	22
4 If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	16	3	3	9	0	31
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	7	7	3	3	1	21
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	1	0	2	10	9	22
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	9	6	2	2	3	22
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	4	8	5	4	1	22
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	1	4	6	6	5	22
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	5	6	11	22
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	2	2	8	8	2	22
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	1	6	8	4	3	22
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	3	5	6	5	3	22
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	3	9	8	1	0	21
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	4	2	12	4	22
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	1	1	5	9	5	21
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	3	14	1	2	0	20
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	1	4	5	10	2	22
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	1	10	7	3	21
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	3	8	3	7	1	22
21. Principal..................................	11	11	0	0	0	22
22. Teacher..................................	22	0	0	0	0	22
23. Parent..................................	21	1	0	0	0	22
24. School Psychologist......................	5	16	1	0	0	22
25. Child..................................	3	8	2	0	0	23
26. School Promotion Committee...............	3	16	2	0	0	21
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	11	10	0	0	21
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	3	9	3	1	4	20
	2	0				2

TABLE 7b: SURVEY--Primary Teachers, 15 or more yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	50	32	5	14	0
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	14	64	9	14	0
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	50	41	5	5	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	52	10	10	29	0
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	33	33	14	14	5
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	5	0	9	45	41
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	41	27	9	9	14
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	18	36	23	18	5
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	5	18	27	27	23
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	23	27	50
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	9	9	36	36	9
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	5	27	36	18	14
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	14	23	27	23	14
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	14	43	38	5	0
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	18	9	55	18
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	5	5	24	43	24
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	15	70	5	10	0
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	5	18	23	45	9
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	5	48	33	14
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	14	36	14	32	5
21. Principal..................................	50	50	0	0	0
22. Teacher..................................	100	0	0	0	0
23. Parent..................................	95	5	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	23	73	5	0	0
25. Child..................................	57	35	9	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee..............	14	76	10	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	52	48	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	14	41	14	4	18
	9	0			

TABLE 8a: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	18	36	6	8	2	70
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	8	44	5	11	2	70
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	22	37	3	6	1	69
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	38	19	5	7	1	70
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	36	19	5	9	1	70
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	4	5	24	37	70
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	37	18	5	7	3	70
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	16	31	10	11	2	70
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	7	9	6	25	22	69
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	2	3	3	28	34	70
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	5	16	19	24	6	70
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	6	26	19	13	6	70
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	4	23	17	19	7	70
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	16	31	11	8	4	70
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	2	11	10	35	12	70
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	3	16	16	22	13	70
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	14	32	10	10	3	69
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	6	14	9	36	5	70
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	1	1	32	23	13	70
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	7	26	2	28	6	69
21. Principal..................................	44	22	1	0	0	67
22. Teacher..................................	66	1	0	0	0	67
23. Parent..................................	41	24	2	0	0	67
24. School Psychologist......................	11	52	4	0	0	67
25. Child..................................	20	40	6	0	0	66
26. School Promotion Committee................	29	31	7	0	0	67
27. Superintendent of Schools................	1	25	39	0	0	65
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	23	18	10	0	4	55
	21	1				22

TABLE 8b: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	26	51	9	11	3
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	11	63	7	16	3
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	32	54	4	9	1
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	54	27	7	10	1
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	51	27	7	13	1
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	6	7	34	53
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	53	26	7	10	4
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	23	44	14	16	3
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	10	13	9	36	32
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	3	4	4	40	49
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	7	23	27	34	9
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	9	37	27	19	9
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	6	33	24	27	10
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	23	44	16	11	6
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	3	16	14	50	17
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	4	23	23	31	19
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	20	46	14	14	4
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	9	20	13	51	7
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	1	1	46	33	19
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	10	38	3	41	9
21. Principal................................	66	33	1	0	0
22. Teacher................................	99	1	0	0	0
23. Parent................................	61	36	3	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	16	78	6	0	0
25. Child................................	30	61	9	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	43	46	10	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools...............	2	38	60	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	30	23	13	0	5
	27	1			

TABLE 9a: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers, 2-5 yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	1	4	0	2	0	7
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	1	4	0	2	0	7
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	0	7	0	0	0	7
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	2	3	1	1	0	7
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	3	3	0	1	0	7
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	1	2	4	7
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	1	2	1	2	1	7
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	0	4	0	3	0	7
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	1	1	1	3	6
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	0	3	4	7
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	0	1	1	4	1	7
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	1	4	1	1	7
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	1	3	2	1	7
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	2	3	1	1	0	7
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	1	1	2	3	7
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	1	1	5	0	7
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	0	5	1	0	1	7
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	1	0	3	3	0	7
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	3	4	0	7
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	1	4	0	2	0	7
21. Principal..................................	6	1	0	0	0	7
22. Teacher..................................	7	0	0	0	0	7
23. Parent..................................	7	0	0	0	0	7
24. School Psychologist......................	1	6	0	0	0	7
25. Child..................................	3	3	0	0	0	6
26. School Promotion Committee...............	4	3	0	0	0	7
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	2	4	0	0	6
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	4	2	1	0	0	7
	3	0				3

TABLE 9b: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers, 2-5 yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	14	57	0	29	0
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	14	57	0	29	0
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	0	100	0	0	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	29	43	14	14	0
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	43	43	0	14	0
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	14	29	57
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	14	29	14	29	14
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	0	57	0	43	0
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	17	17	17	50
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	0	43	57
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	0	14	14	57	14
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	14	57	14	14
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	14	43	29	14
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	29	43	14	14	0
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	14	14	29	43
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	14	14	71	0
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	0	71	14	0	14
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	14	0	43	43	0
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	43	57	0
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	14	57	0	29	0
21. Principal..................................	86	14	0	0	0
22. Teacher..................................	00	0	0	0	0
23. Parent..................................	00	0	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	14	86	0	0	0
25. Child..................................	50	50	0	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	57	43	0	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	33	67	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	40	20	10	0	0
	30	0			

TABLE 10a: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers, 6-15 yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	8	16	4	4	2	34
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	3	21	4	4	2	34
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	12	14	2	4	1	33
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	20	8	1	4	1	34
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	16	10	4	4	0	34
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	3	2	11	18	34
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	22	8	1	2	1	34
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	8	16	4	5	1	34
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	6	5	2	11	10	34
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	2	3	1	10	18	34
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	4	9	6	13	2	34
12 At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	4	14	6	8	2	34
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	2	11	9	10	2	34
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	8	14	5	5	2	34
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	1	7	6	15	5	34
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	1	10	8	8	7	34
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	7	15	6	5	1	34
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	2	7	4	18	3	34
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	1	13	12	8	34
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	2	10	2	14	5	33
21. Principal................................	20	11	1	0	0	32
22. Teacher................................	32	0	0	0	0	32
23. Parent................................	21	10	1	0	0	32
24. School Psychologist......................	8	21	3	0	0	32
25. Child................................	10	19	2	0	0	31
26. School Promotion Committee..............	16	15	1	0	0	32
27. Superintendent of Schools................	1	14	17	0	0	32
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	9	7	6	0	2	24
	10	1				11

TABLE 10b: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers, 6-15 yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	24	47	12	12	6
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	9	62	12	12	6
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	36	42	6	12	3
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	59	24	3	12	3
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	47	29	12	12	0
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	9	6	32	53
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	65	24	3	6	3
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	24	47	12	15	3
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	18	15	6	32	29
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	6	9	3	29	53
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	12	26	18	38	6
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	12	41	18	24	6
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	6	32	26	29	6
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	24	41	15	15	6
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	3	21	18	44	15
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	3	29	24	24	21
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	21	44	18	15	3
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	6	21	12	53	9
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	3	38	35	24
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	6	30	6	42	15
21. Principal..................................	63	34	3	0	0
22. Teacher..................................	100	0	0	0	0
23. Parent..................................	66	31	3	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	25	66	9	0	0
25. Child..................................	32	61	6	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	50	47	3	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	3	44	53	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	26	20	17	0	6
	29	3			

TABLE 11a: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers, 15 or more yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	9	13	2	2	0	26
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	3	17	1	5	0	26
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	9	14	1	2	0	26
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	16	7	1	2	0	26
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	16	6	1	2	1	26
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	1	1	10	14	26
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	13	8	3	1	1	26
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	6	9	7	3	1	26
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	1	3	3	11	8	26
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	1	14	11	26
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	1	6	10	6	3	26
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	2	11	7	3	3	26
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	2	9	5	7	3	26
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	6	12	5	2	1	26
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	1	1	3	17	4	26
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	2	4	5	9	6	26
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	6	11	2	5	1	25
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	3	4	2	15	2	26
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	1	0	14	6	5	26
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	3	10	0	12	1	26
21. Principal................................	15	10	0	0	0	25
22. Teacher................................	24	1	0	0	0	25
23. Parent................................	13	11	1	0	0	25
24. School Psychologist......................	2	22	1	0	0	25
25. Child................................	7	15	3	0	0	25
26. School Promotion Committee...............	9	10	6	0	0	25
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	7	18	0	0	25
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	10	8	3	0	2	23
	8	0	0	0	0	8

TABLE 11b: SURVEY--Intermediate Teachers, 15 or more yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	35	50	8	8	0
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	12	65	4	19	0
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	35	54	4	8	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	62	27	4	8	0
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	62	23	4	8	4
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	4	4	38	54
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	50	31	12	4	4
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	23	35	27	12	4
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	4	12	12	42	31
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	4	54	42
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	4	23	38	23	12
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	8	42	27	12	12
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	8	35	19	27	12
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	23	46	19	8	4
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	4	4	12	65	15
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	8	15	19	35	23
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	24	44	8	20	4
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	12	15	8	58	8
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	4	0	54	23	19
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	12	38	0	46	4
21. Principal..................................	60	40	0	0	0
22. Teacher..................................	96	4	0	0	0
23. Parent..................................	52	44	4	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	8	88	4	0	0
25. Child..................................	28	60	12	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	36	40	24	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	28	72	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	32	26	10	0	6
	26	0			

TABLE 12a: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	9	32	7	13	1	62
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	10	32	11	8	2	63
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	18	29	8	8	0	63
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	15	16	19	9	4	63
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	21	22	8	9	3	63
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	1	6	27	29	63
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	19	23	10	8	3	63
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	7	28	19	7	2	63
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	1	3	6	31	22	63
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	1	6	12	28	15	62
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	3	9	17	23	11	63
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	13	28	16	6	63
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	3	19	19	19	3	63
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	16	38	7	1	1	63
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	2	17	19	18	7	63
16. Grade repetition has the affect of motivating students to work harder.	3	19	21	17	3	63
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	9	42	11	1	0	63
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	5	23	12	18	4	62
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	7	34	16	4	61
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	11	21	9	17	5	63
21. Principal..................................	31	31	0	0	0	62
22. Teacher..................................	58	3	0	0	0	61
23. Parent..................................	39	22	2	0	0	63
24. School Psychologist......................	12	38	12	0	0	62
25. Child..................................	14	32	16	0	0	62
26. School Promotion Committee...............	25	30	8	0	0	63
27. Superintendent of Schools................	1	16	43	0	0	60
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	14	18	12	1	1	46
	24	1				25

TABLE 12b: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	15	52	11	21	2
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	16	51	17	13	3
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	29	46	13	13	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	24	25	30	14	6
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	33	35	13	14	5
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	2	10	43	46
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	30	37	16	13	5
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	11	44	30	11	3
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	2	5	10	49	35
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	2	10	19	45	24
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	5	14	27	37	17
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	21	44	25	10
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	5	30	30	30	5
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	25	60	11	2	2
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	3	27	30	29	11
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	5	30	33	27	5
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	14	67	17	2	0
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	8	37	19	29	6
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	11	56	26	7
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	17	33	14	27	8
21. Principal................................	50	50	0	0	0
22. Teacher................................	95	5	0	0	0
23. Parent................................	62	35	3	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	19	61	19	0	0
25. Child................................	23	52	26	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee..............	40	48	13	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	2	27	72	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	20	25	17	1	1
	34	1			

TABLE 13a: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers, 2-5 yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	0	8	0	6	0	14
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	0	11	1	3	0	15
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	4	9	0	2	0	15
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	2	3	7	2	1	15
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	5	6	1	3	0	15
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	2	7	6	15
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	5	7	0	1	2	15
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	2	7	4	1	1	15
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	0	2	6	7	15
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	3	6	6	15
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	0	1	3	7	4	15
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	0	11	3	1	15
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	4	7	3	1	15
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	4	11	0	0	0	15
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	2	4	5	3	1	15
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	6	7	2	0	15
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	2	11	2	0	0	15
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	1	9	2	3	0	15
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	2	10	3	0	15
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	6	7	1	1	0	15
21. Principal..............................	11	4	0	0	0	15
22. Teacher..............................	15	0	0	0	0	15
23. Parent..............................	9	6	0	0	0	15
24. School Psychologist......................	2	12	1	0	0	15
25. Child..............................	3	7	4	0	0	14
26. School Promotion Committee...............	7	6	2	0	0	15
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	4	9	0	0	13
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	5	4	3	0	0	12
	8	0				8

TABLE 13b: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers, 2 - 5 yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	0	57	0	43	0
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	0	73	7	20	0
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	27	60	0	13	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	13	20	47	13	7
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	33	40	7	20	0
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	13	47	40
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	33	47	0	7	13
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	13	47	27	7	7
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	0	13	40	47
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	0	20	40	40
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	0	7	20	47	27
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	0	73	20	7
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	27	47	20	7
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	27	73	0	0	0
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	13	27	33	20	7
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	40	47	13	0
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	13	73	13	0	0
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	7	60	13	20	0
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	13	67	20	0
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	40	47	7	7	0
21. Principal.................................	73	27	0	0	0
22. Teacher.................................	100	0	0	0	0
23. Parent.................................	60	40	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	13	80	7	0	0
25. Child.................................	21	50	29	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	47	40	13	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	31	69	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	25	20	15	0	0
	40	0			

TABLE 14a: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers, 6-15 yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	5	18	4	6	1	34
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	6	16	6	4	2	34
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	11	14	7	2	0	34
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	9	7	11	5	2	34
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	11	10	5	5	3	34
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	3	15	16	34
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	11	11	5	6	1	34
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	4	16	11	3	0	34
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	1	2	3	18	10	34
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	1	3	8	15	7	34
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	1	4	12	12	5	34
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	10	11	7	6	34
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	12	10	11	1	34
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	8	21	4	1	0	34
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	11	10	10	3	34
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	3	8	11	11	1	34
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	4	21	9	0	0	34
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	2	10	8	10	3	33
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	5	15	10	2	32
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	5	9	5	12	3	34
21. Principal.................................	18	15	0	0	0	33
22. Teacher.................................	31	2	0	0	0	33
23. Parent.................................	22	12	0	0	0	34
24. School Psychologist......................	6	20	5	0	0	31
25. Child.................................	6	22	5	0	0	33
26. School Promotion Committee..............	15	16	3	0	0	34
27. Superintendent of Schools..............	1	9	22	0	0	32
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	9	7	7	1	0	24
	12	1				13

TABLE 14b: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers, 6-15 yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	15	53	12	18	3
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	18	47	18	12	6
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	32	41	21	6	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	26	21	32	15	6
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	32	29	15	15	9
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	0	9	44	47
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	32	32	15	18	3
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	12	47	32	9	0
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	3	6	9	53	29
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	3	9	24	44	21
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	3	12	35	35	15
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	29	32	21	18
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	0	35	29	32	3
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	24	62	12	3	0
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	32	29	29	9
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	9	24	32	32	3
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	12	62	26	0	0
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	6	30	24	30	9
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	16	47	31	6
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	15	26	15	35	9
21. Principal..................................	55	45	0	0	0
22. Teacher.........?........................	94	6	0	0	0
23. Parent..................................	65	35	0	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	19	65	16	0	0
25. Child..................................	18	67	15	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee..............	44	47	9	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	3	28	69	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	24	19	19	3	0
	32	3			

TABLE 15a: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers, 15 or more yr. experience (Raw Data)

	A	B	C	D	E	TOT
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	4	10	3	3	0	20
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	4	10	4	2	0	20
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	3	12	1	4	0	20
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	6	7	4	2	1	20
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	6	8	2	4	0	20
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	1	3	7	9	20
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	6	6	5	2	1	20
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	2	8	5	4	1	20
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	1	1	9	9	20
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	3	2	8	6	19
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	2	4	4	7	3	20
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	4	10	6	0	20
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	3	6	4	6	1	20
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	5	10	3	1	1	20
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	4	4	7	5	20
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	7	5	6	2	20
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	3	14	2	1	0	20
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	4	6	3	6	1	20
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	12	6	2	20
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	2	8	3	5	2	20
21. Principal..................................	6	14	0	0	0	20
22. Teacher..................................	18	1	0	0	0	19
23. Parent..................................	2	6	2	0	0	20
24. School Psychologist.......................	2	12	6	0	0	20
25. Child..................................	7	6	7	0	0	20
26. School Promotion Committee...............	5	12	3	0	0	20
27. Superintendent of Schools...............	0	6	14	0	0	20
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	1	9	3	0	2	15
	6	0				6

TABLE 15b: SURVEY--Secondary Teachers, 15 or more yr. experience (Percentage)

	A	B	C	D	E
1. Physical maturity should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not to retain a student.	20	50	15	15	0
2. Standardized tests are helpful in assessing whether or not to retain a student.	20	50	20	10	0
3. Social/behavioural adjustment should be a major consideration when deciding whether or not a child should be retained.	15	60	5	20	0
4. If a student is to be retained, it would be most beneficial educationally for him/her at the primary level (K-3).	30	35	20	10	5
5. Promotion in the elementary school should be by grade level rather than by individual subject.	30	40	10	20	0
6. If most students pass then academic standards are 'too slack'.	0	5	15	35	45
7. School District 72 should have a uniform promotion/retention policy.	30	30	25	10	5
8. Grade repetition causes a student to feel negatively about himself/herself.	10	40	25	20	5
9. Promotion from Grade 7 to Grade 8 should be automatic.	0	5	5	45	45
10. Retention should be seriously discouraged at the kindergarten and grade one levels.	0	16	11	42	32
11. In the long range, grade repetition is seldom of value to a student.	10	20	20	35	15
12. At any grade level, low achievers who are promoted do as well as low achievers who are retained.	0	20	50	30	0
13. Grade repetition increases the likelihood that a student will 'drop out' before graduation.	15	30	20	30	5
14. Retention has a legitimate function in our present educational system.	25	50	15	5	5
15. Grade repetition serves to reduce the range of abilities in a class.	0	20	20	35	25
16. Grade repetition has the effect of motivating students to work harder.	0	35	25	30	10
17. Grade repetition is one way to help students have adequate time to mature.	15	70	10	5	0
18. Students should only be promoted when they have mastered essential language arts and mathematics skills at their grade level.	20	30	15	30	5
19. Research indicates significant benefits of grade repetition for the majority of students with academic or social problems.	0	0	60	30	10
20. Promotion indicates that a student has mastered a certain stage in learning.	10	40	15	25	10
21. Principal................................	30	70	0	0	0
22. Teacher................................	95	5	0	0	0
23. Parent................................	60	30	10	0	0
24. School Psychologist......................	10	60	30	0	0
25. Child................................	35	30	35	0	0
26. School Promotion Committee...............	25	60	15	0	0
27. Superintendent of Schools................	0	30	70	0	0
28 or 29. Regardless of who is involved in the decision, who should have the FINAL SAY?	5	43	14	0	10
	29	0			

APPENDIX H

Teacher Interview Questions

QUESTIONS -- Teacher Interviews

Background: Years of Experience....Grades Taught....

1. Why are students retained?
2. Does retention encourage learning?
3. Have you ever retained students?
4. With whom/when was it most successful?
5. Does a single student stand out? Why?
6. What effects has retention had on individual students?
    - a) reaction from peers
    - b) self-concept
7. Are boys/girls dealt with equally?
8. What trends in retention/promotion have you observed during your teaching career?
9. Have your views changed? Why?
10. What impact has social promotion had?
11. How familiar are you with research?
12. Which way would you like to see things go?

Additional comments:

APPENDIX I

Light's Retention Scale Recording Form

LIGHT'S RETENTION SCALE
Recording Form

Name of Student ____________________

Date of Birth ____________________ **Present Grade** ____________________

School ____________________ **Teacher** ____________________

Date ____________________

DIRECTIONS: Read each item and circle the number following that item which best describes the student's situation. Then add the numbers circled. Interpretation of this total score is found in the *Light's Retention Scale* Manual.

---

1. *School Attendance*

Student misses more than 25 days of school in nine months	0
Student misses 11 to 24 days of school in nine months	2
Student misses 3 to 10 days of school in nine months	4
Student misses three days of school in nine months	5

2. *Intelligence*

Student's intelligence is within the average range of ability	0
Student's intelligence is in the lower ten percent	4
Student's intelligence is in the upper ten percent	4
Student's intelligence is in the lower two percent	5
Student's intelligence is in the upper two percent	5

3. *Present Level of Academic Achievement*

Student is one year behind grade level in all academic areas	0
Student is more than one year behind in all academic areas	3
Student is at grade expectancy only in reading but one year behind in other areas	3
Student is at or above grade expectancy in reading and spelling	4
Student is at or above grade expectancy in all academic areas	5

4. *Physical Size*

Student is much smaller than others the same age	0
Student is only slightly smaller than most others the same age	2
Student is the same physical size as most others the same age	4
Student is larger than others the same age	5

5. *Student's Age*

Student's birthday falls in the last half of the calendar year (July 1st through December 1st) and is in the younger half of his present class	0
Student's birthday falls in the first half of the calendar year and is in the older half of his present class	2
Student is one year older than the students in his present class	4
Student is more than one year older than the students in his present class	5

6. *Sex of Student*

Student is a boy in kindergarten through third grade	0
Student is a girl in kindergarten through third grade	2
Student is a boy in fourth through twelfth grade	4
Student is a girl in fourth through twelfth grade	4

7. *Siblings*

Student has no brothers or sisters living in the same household	0
Student has a brother or sister more than three grade levels above or below student's present grade level	2
Student has a brother or sister two grade levels above or below present grade level	3
Student has a brother or sister one grade level above student's present grade	4
Student has brother or sister at same grade level or one grade level below student's present grade level	5

8. *Previous Retention*

Student has never been retained and started school at the expected age	0
Student has been held out of kindergarten and started school one year later than other children his age	3
Student has had one or more grade retentions	5

OVER

Subtotal ____________

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9. *History of Learning Disabilities*

Student has been evaluated by a psychologist or other professional and it is clear that there are no learning disabilities	0
The teacher feels there is no evidence of a learning disability	2
The teacher feels that the child has a mild learning disability	4
Student has been evaluated by an educational psychologist and found to have a learning disability	5

10. *Student's Attitude about Possible Retention*

Student requests retention to "learn what was missed."	0
Student seems disinterested in whether he should be retained or not	3
Student requests retention but insists that he get the same teacher next year	3
Student agrees to retention only after parent persuasion	3
Student does not want retention but agrees that he is behind in his school work	4
Student gets upset if the subject of retention is approached	5

11. *Parent's School Participation*

Parents always attend school conferences and are actively involved in their child's education	0
Parents usually attend teacher conferences but rarely are involved in other school activities	2
Parents attend very few teacher conferences	3
Parents never attend teacher conferences	4
Parents never attend teacher conferences and are hostile to the overall school program	5

12. *Motivation to Complete School Tasks*

Student spends at least 80 percent of class time working on school assignments, even though some may be too difficult	0
Student works on those tasks that interest him	1
Student is disinterested in school but will work if encouraged	3
Student is disinterested in school and needs one-to-one help to complete assignments	4
Student will avoid school related tasks even if offered individual help	5

13. *History of Delinquency*

Student has no history of antisocial behavior	0
Student occasionally has difficulty following school rules	2
Student often has problems on the playground and in the classroom	3
Student has a history of discipline problems in the classroom, playground and, community, but has not had contact with law enforcement	4
Student has a history of discipline problems in the classroom, playground, and community, and has had contact with law enforcement	5

14. *Knowledge of English Language*

Student has good communication skills using the English language	0
Student has very limited use of the English language but is acquiring new skills quickly	2
Student is not bilingual and has poor English language skills	3
Student has little or no knowledge of the English language and is not acquiring new skills	5

15. *Present Grade Placement*

Student is in kindergarten	0
Student is in first grade	1
Student is in second or third grade	2
Student is in fourth to sixth grade	4
Student is in seventh to twelfth grade	5

16. *Transiency*

Student has attended one school since kindergarten	0
Student has attended two or three schools in the past three years	3
Student has attended four to six schools in the past six years	4
Student has attended seven or more schools in the past three years	5

17. *Emotional Problems*

Student does not exhibit behavior sometimes seen in emotionally disturbed children (i.e., distractible, overactive, nervous, cries often, etc.)	0
Student exhibits behavior sometimes seen in emotionally disturbed children (i.e., distractible, overactive, nervous, cries often, etc.)	4

18. *Experiential Background*

Student comes from a background that offers almost no opportunity for social or cultural stimulation	0
Student has minimal experience with the community and gets little experience in non-school related activities	3
Student has had many stimulation experiences (i.e., foreign travel, summer camp, church groups, scouts, etc.)	4

19. *Immature Behavior*

Student associates with children two years or more younger than his actual age	0
Student associates with children one year younger than his actual age	1
Student associates with children his age	3
Student associates with students older than his age	5

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Total ________

SCORING: LIGHT'S RETENTION SCALE

The scoring of Light's Retention Scale is simple. Under each item, the individual filling out the form circles the number (0-5) behind the appropriate statement. On the Recording Form, these circled numbers are added and a total is derived.

INTERPRETATION

This table is used to interpret the results of the total sum of circled numbers.

An asterisk (*) indicates that, any time a child receives a circled number of 5, it is likely he will not benefit by retention. The researcxh has justified that, when an item is marked with a 5, the chances of a child benefiting from retention are minimal.

The reader must keep in mind that these "scores" are to be used for guideline purposes only. It would be incorrect to view the circled sums as standardized test scores. These results were subjectively assigned after a careful study of the research and field experience.

Total Sum Circled	Interpretation
0-9	Excellent retention candidate (should have no 5's circled on Recording Form)
10-20	Good retention candidate (should have no 5's circled on Recording Form)
21-45	Fair retention candidate (should have no 5's circled on Recording Form)
45-63	Marginal retention candidate (should have no 5' circled on Recording Form)
54-71	Poor retention candidate
72-92	Student should not be retained

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APPENDIX J

"Retention"

RETENTION

Action Steps	Suggested Time of Action--School Months
1. Observe child's progress and document	Months 1 and 2
a. Use school reporting system	
b. Use current test interpretations with emphasis on child's performance in each subject area	
c. Consult with district psycholgists	
2. Determine if child is performing at or below grade level	Months 2-4
3. Inform parents honestly and specifically	Months 2-4
4. Consult with school 'review and referral' committee and obtain a group assessment of the child's performance	Months 2-4
a. Determine possible causes of difficulty	
b. Make recommendations about possible solutions	
c. Determine information to be shared during the conference with parents; identify who will participate in the conference	
5. Conduct parent conference	Months 2-4
a. Inform parents of apparent difficulty	
b. Seek additional input from parents	
c. Share with parents the recommendations of the 'review and referral' committee	
d. Reconcile any difference between parent vs. school perception of the child's problem	
6. Follow through on recommendations and continue to observe the child's progress	Months 2-6
7. Repeat steps 1-6	Months 2-8
8. Review all information on the child's performance; make recommendation about promotion or retention	Month 8

Adapted from Brown, 1981, p. 349.

AFTERWORD

During this project we have come in contact with most educators in the Campbell River District. Often it was the first time we had met some of these people or had been in the schools in which they work. This was an experience that we feel privileged to have had. It did not take long to recognize the high degree of professionalism and the true dedication of the many people who work in the Campbell River School system. Our children are indeed fortunate.